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THE

MOURTRAY FAMILY.

A Novel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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FOR

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THE

FAMILY

OF

MOURTRAY.

CHAP. I.

HAD Emma been at liberty to follow her own inclinations, inſtead of attending her mother to the play in the evening, ſhe would have gone to the Ducheſs, longing, moſt impatiently, to depoſit her little treaſure in her hands; but this being impoſſible, ſhe reſolved to go to her the following morning: ſhe was, however, diſappointed, for it rained hard, and Mrs. Mourtray could not ſpare her carriage.

It was not, therefore, till the third morning after her firſt viſit to the emigrants, that ſhe had it in her power to make them a ſecond. As ſoon as ſhe appeared, not only the Ducheſs, but her daughter-in-law, whom ſhe called Sidonie, flew to meet her, overwhelming her with careſſes, and the warmeſt expreſſions of gratitude.

Emma, by no means comprehending the cauſe of theſe very extraordinary effuſions, too exceſſive for her former ſmall donation, ſtood fixed with amazement; which increaſed as ſhe ſurveyed the alterations that had been effected in the rooms.

No ſtraw mattreſs was ſpread upon the floor; the ſhabby bed had been exchanged for a very good one; and, through an open door, two others, very neat, appeared in an adjoining room. A ſofa, and many uſeful articles of furniture, as well

well as ſeveral new dreſſes piled upon a chair, convinced her that ſome perſon, as conſiderate as diligent, had thus ſupplied the wants of her emigrant friends.

She heard, with infinite aſtoniſhment, all the merit of this beneficence aſcribed to herſelf; and though ſhe diſclaimed it, with the ſtrongeſt aſſeverations of ignorance, ſtill ſhe could not gain belief.

"Who but yourſelf, Mademoiſelle," ſaid the Ducheſs, "who ſo kindly ſought out our wretched abode, could give us theſe things, ſtrangers as we are here? Beſides, too, the man who brought them poſitively affirmed he came by your orders."

"What man? I proteſt...."

"Nay, nay, *ma belle Demoiſelle*, do not attempt to deceive me, having before experienced your goodneſs. I muſt

ſtill believe you to be our be
treſs."

" Pray, Madam," ſaid Emma, "
good to deſcribe this man who pret
I ſent him."

" A ſhort thick man . . ."

" With large ſtaring eyes?" e
aſked Emma, who began to ſuſp
might be Chowles.

" No, very ſmall ones, ſunk d
his head."

" Well, then, I am quite at a
gueſs the perſon."—But ſuddenly
lecting that Lord Miramont had, a
ing, aſked where the Ducheſs live
exclaimed—" O yes; I do believe I
whence theſe things come."

Then making further inquiries, ſhe learned that, late in the preceding evening, this thick ſhort perſonage arrived, and, having deſired to ſpeak with the Ducheſs, ſaid, in French, that Mademoiſelle Mourtray had ſent him with the things, which ſhe had ordered and paid for in the name of Madame la Ducheſſe; that, wondering what this could mean, and apprehenſive of ſome trick, ſhe had refuſed admittance to the contents of a cart that actually was ſtanding at the door: but that the man either being, or pretending to be, deaf, ſhe never could make him hear her. So that, in a ſhort time, without further ceremony, he and two men he had brought to aſſiſt him (who could only ſpeak Engliſh), took down the old bed, put up the new ones, and, removing all the old broken furniture, replaced theſe articles with what ſhe now ſaw.

friend, who, ſhe believed, was the ſame perſon that had contributed to make her lodgings more comfortable, with a letter for the Ducheſs, which, perhaps, might explain the myſtery. She requeſted, however, that ſhe would defer reading it till after her departure; as ſhe was in the greateſt haſte, and wiſhed to enjoy her converſation the few moments ſhe had to ſtay.

She then delivered the bank-note folded in a ſheet of paper, in the form of a letter ſealed; which the Ducheſs, who ſeemed more and more amazed, with difficulty would take, but under the condition of knowing the name of the writer: this Emma declined telling, though ſhe declared, upon her honour, it was not herſelf; and, at laſt, ſhe conquered her ſcruples.

Preſently afterwards ſhe took her leave; and, as ſhe was careſſing one of the

children, ſhe ſlipped into its hand what ſhe had collected from her mother and Sydney; and then promiſing that ſhe would call ſoon again, ſhe departed.

No longer now could Emma diſguiſe from herſelf the paſſion that filled her heart; nor did ſhe attempt to conquer it, though well aware that many cogent reaſons forbade her indulging it. That ſo young a man as Lord Miramont, conſtantly whirled into a vortex of diſſipation, ſhould be capable of ſo much delicacy in diſpenſing his gifts,—of ſo much thought and conſideration in beſtowing them, ſo as to be the moſt uſeful,—appeared to her ſo charming a trait in his character, that ſhe almoſt perſuaded herſelf, ſtrong as appearances were againſt him, he could not, in fact, have any improper attachment.

To ſee and thank him for this laſt benevolent action, which pleaſed her a thou-

thouſand times more than the bank-note, was her moſt ardent wiſh; but this was not gratified till the following Saturday; when, being with her mother at the opera, ſhe met him, after it was over, in the ſmall room above.

Her cheeks glowed with joy:—"O, Lord Miramont," cried ſhe, "how kind, how nobly, you have behaved to the poor emigrants! A million of thanks for your goodneſs!"

"Softly," cried he, ſmiling; "no thanks are neceſſary, though it is highly gratifying to me to have pleaſed you; but ſay no more on the ſubject."

"I beg your Lordſhip's pardon; I cannot paſs it over ſo ſlightly. But why would you give me the credit of your generoſity?"

"What do you mean, Miſs Mourtray?" ſaid he, looking ſurprized.

"I need not explain," anſwered ſhe, "what you know perfectly well."

"I do not, indeed!"

"Nay, now you carry reſerve too far: you muſt be ſenſible, Lord Miramont, your conduct could not remain a myſtery to me; for could you ſuppoſe I would receive thanks to which I have no title? However, as you wiſhed to do good incognito, I did not diſcloſe your name."

"May I periſh, Miſs Mourtray, if I underſtand one ſyllable of what you allude to."

"I admire your delicacy, Lord Miramont, in your conduct towards the emigrants; but, as I know every particular, you

you muſt excuſe me if I diſbelieve your aſſertion."

"By all that's ſacred I know not what you mean! Do, pray, explain yourſelf?"

"Is it poſſible," thought Emma to herſelf, "that I have been miſtaken?" But rejecting ſo unpleaſant a doubt, ſhe ſaid—"Can you, Lord Miramont, affirm, upon your honour, that you did not, in my name, ſend the Ducheſs beds, and all ſorts of things, the day after you gave me the note for her?"

"I can affirm, ay, and ſwear too, that I never in my life ſent her any thing.—Now I hope you are convinced."

Emma ſaw too clearly, by his ſerious air, that he told truth; and her mortification now was as great as her ſatisfaction had been before. She then related all

the circumſtances to him of this myſterious tranſaction, and both agreed that Lady Wilmington muſt have been the perſon in queſtion; yet it ſeemed to them very unlike her, to diſpenſe favours under a borrowed name; however, even this appeared more probable than that it could be Chowles.

The pleaſure Lord Miramont expreſſed at the improvement of the emigrants' ſituation, ſomewhat conſoled Emma for her diſappointment in finding he had no hand in it; and now, merely from curioſity, ſhe wiſhed to know the truth; but ſhe was a good deal embarraſſed how to get at it, not daring to interrogate Lady Wilmington on the ſubject; who, after all, perhaps, knew nothing of the matter.

Her doubts, in this reſpect, were ſoon terminated; for, two days after her converſation with the Marquis, when ſhe called

called in Grosvenor Square, she found Lady Wilmington and her daughters going to an auction; she was, therefore, retiring, but the former invited her to be of the party, saying, "I must have a little talk with you by the way relative to the French family."

As soon as they were seated in the carriage, Lady Wilmington said—"I hope, Miss Mourtray, you have not given those people reason to expect a visit from me?"

"No, Madam."

"I am glad of it," continued the Countess; "because, upon talking over the matter with Lord Wilmington, he has dissuaded me from it; for, he says, connected as he is with them, they would naturally expect a great deal more than we ought in prudence to do for them, considering we have children of our own.

How-

However, ſomething ſhall be done, though not juſt now."

Emma made no anſwer to theſe prudent reſolutions, but could not help ſmiling, in her own thoughts, that ſhe had even for an inſtant ſuppoſed it poſſible that Lady Wilmington had been ſo liberal. Thinking, however, that ſhe deſerved ſome little mortification, ſhe told her, that her kind purpoſe had been anticipated by ſome benevolent perſon who choſe to remain unknown, but whom ſhe ſuſpected to be the rich merchant, Mr Chowles.

Lady Wilmington, with a face like ſcarlet, exclaimed—" Mr. Chowles! my God! what an humiliation for the Ducheſs to receive favours from ſuch a low perſon! I wonder ſhe would accept of them!"

" He

" Her ſcruples, Madam, probably yielded to the urgency of her diſtreſs; and the perſon who amply provided for her wants, whatever his rank might be, ſhe thought entitled to her gratitude."

Lady Wilmington frowned in ſilence. —When they arrived at the auction, they found the room much crowded; ſhe had been there previous to the ſale; and, as her only object was to purchaſe a remarkably elegant deſſert ſervice of French china, which ſhe knew would not be put up till one of the laſt of the articles in the catalogue, ſhe had purpoſely arrived late.

She had ſuch a majeſtic impoſing air, that, although in mixed company little reſpect is paid to rank, many were diſpoſed to make way for her; but, where ſhe found any reſiſtance, ſhe puſhed on with ſuch imperative motions and looks of aſtoniſhment, as if ſhe had a right to

ſome

ſome particular diſtinction, wh
were in the wrong to diſpute.

Having at length ſeated her
party, ſhe waited patiently wl
auctioneer finiſhed diſpoſing of
cles ſhe did not want; obſervi
much ſatisfaction, that the room
ſo faſt, that not many bidders v
left to oppoſe her.

The wiſhed-for moment was
rived. Mr. Voluble, the auction
already pronounced a panegyric
deſſert ſervice: it was put up, an
much inferior to its value bid
The complaiſant Mr. Voluble,
quainted with the Counteſs, as t
roſe, conſulted her ſignificant n
nobody ſeeming inclined to bid m
laſt nod, ſhe flattered herſelf, had
in her favour; he himſelf, ſmirki
agreeably than ever, ſeemed to ſa
looks, "you are ſure of it;" and

l hammer was on the point of
, when ſuddenly a loud rough voice
larger ſum; and buſtling forward,
his wig puſhed awry, and in a pro-
erſpiration, appeared Chowles.

dy Wilmington turned pale; and, in
ce ſcarcely articulate, haſtened to
d him; Chowles ſeemed to heſitate;
ıe ſight of him had ſo marvellous an
on Mr. Voluble, that a torrent of
ence burſt from his lips: waving his
ıer, and turning his eyes alternately
ady Wilmington and Chowles, he
ted with energy—"This very beau-
ſervice of *Sève porcelaine, unique* in
ſign, elegant, beyond all others, in
uly graceful form of its diſhes, *cor-*
, compotiers; originally made for
ing of France; never uſed, its ena-
erfect and entire:—this ſuperb and
ding magnificent ſervice, in all its
purity, I ſay, is going—going for
uineas.

"Fifty

" Fifty-five," haſtily cried out Chow
The Counteſs, by an angry nod, m
another effort to ſecure it, but it wc
not do; Chowles bid ſo bold and ra
ly, that, though burſting with rage,
was forced to give up the conteſt.

Chowles, whoſe audacity equalled
rage for fine things, and who deligh
as he ſaid, in outbidding the quality,
ing Lady Wilmington, with her
flaſhing fire, and her cheeks burn
ſtalking majeſtically towards the d
haſtened forwards to make a ſort of
nical apology for bidding againſt a La
though he muſt own, he ſaid, he
proud to find ſuch a conformity betw
his taſte and her Ladyſhip's; " and
know, my Lady," continued he, " t
in ſome caſes, one muſt wave ceremo

" It is your invariable practice, ſ
ſaid ſhe, bridling, " to wave it on all
caſions."

" Um

"Umph! umph! I am ſorry your Ladyſhip has taken offence," cried Chowles, "but I don't ſee why; I am a plain man, 'tis true; but if I can afford to buy fine things, why not have them? One man's money is as good as another's."

During this ſpeech, Lady Wilmington was pinning a black hood cloſe under her chin; wiſhing to have the appearance of guarding her ears more from his voice than from the cold.

"The old Lady," whiſpered he to Emma, "is in a fine ſtew; but if my pretty nut-brown's mouth waters after this ſervice, egad ſhe ſhall have it."

"If you mean me, Sir, I have no ſort of wiſh for, and certainly would not accept, your china."

"Well, well," cried he, "there's a time for all things; a time for taking, and

and a time for refuſing. I hope, ſom
theſe days, to have you in another g
ſort of a mood."

"If you have any buſineſs, I
Mourtray," ſaid Lady Wilmington, "
Mr. *Jowles* ....."

"Chowles, my Lady; my name
Jowles," cried he: but, not heeding
interruption, ſhe continued—"I ſay,
had better appoint ſome place more
venient for its diſcuſſion, and not k
me waiting."

Emma mildly ſaid, ſhe ſhould be
ſorry to do ſo, but thought her Lady
was waiting for her ſervants.

The moment Lady Wilmington
her party were ſeated in her carriage,
indignation had its free courſe:—"U
my word," cried ſhe, "theſe are fi
velling times! Formerly citizens m

neſs, kept in their proper ſphere
ther ſide of Temple Bar, and
vter was all they pretended to.
· all diſtinctions are loſt; they
to put themſelves on a footing
ple of faſhion, and they muſt
ach china truly!"

Chowles, Madam," ſaid Emma,
very great merchant, and im-
rich."

l, what is that to the purpoſe?
keep in his proper place; he
eſpectable there; but he has no
to be elbowing his ſuperiors
ſy laundry maid, I am told, is a
good ſort of a body; but ſhe
pear ſomewhat out of character,
ne as your Mr. *Jowles* does,—if
to ſtand at the waſh-tub in a
nd feathers. However, this, or
ther abſurdity that can happen,
onger ſurpriſe me."

The

The young Ladies ſmiled, but none of them ventured to ſpeak. Emma could not help thinking, during the auction, whilſt Lady Wilmington was bidding ſo eagerly againſt Chowles, that it was ſurpriſing ſhe ſhould not feel aſhamed to ſquander her money thus in ſuperfluities, when ſhe had ſo recently pleaded her poverty as an excuſe, for refuſing to aſſiſt in procuring common neceſſaries for perſons whom ſhe affected to pity.—" Ah!" ſaid ſhe to herſelf, " when caprice or vanity demand gratifications, how open are ſome purſes, and how cloſely ſhut to the calls of humanity."

As averſe as ever from thinking Chowles had been the benefactor of the emigrants, ſhe determined, when ſhe ſhould ſee him at the opera concert, to which ſhe was to go in the evening, with her mother, and Mrs. Prouting, to make him explain this myſtery.

Juſt as Lady Wilmington ſet her down in Wimpole Street, Sydney at the ſame inſtant arrived at the door, and followed her into the houſe. Mrs. Mourtray was dreſſing; and, Emma not chooſing to have a tête-à-tête, ſhe was on the point of ſaying ſhe muſt attend to her toilet, when ſuddenly it occurred to her, that he would be pleaſed to hear that the perſons, for whom he had ſhewn much intereſt when he heard her relate their ſtory to Chowles, were in great meaſure relieved from their diſtreſs; at leaſt for the preſent.

She, therefore, briefly told him all that had happened; but when ſhe mentioned her aſtoniſhment at the conduct of her pretended agent, and that all her endeavours had been ineffectual to diſcover his employer, ſhe perceived, with amazement, that Sydney became extremely red, and fixed his eyes on the ground.

" Good

" Good Heaven!" exclaimed ſhe, " is it poſſible? Surely, Mr. Sydney, it cannot be you who have done all this!"

He made no anſwer, but his embarraſſment ſeemed to increaſe.

" Pray, ſpeak; relieve my doubts; do, I intreat you."

" What ſhall I ſay, Miſs Mourtray? How apologiſe for the liberty I took in uſing your name on this occaſion? But, in what other way could I preſume to be of ſome little uſe to perſons, to whom my name was unknown; whom, even in relieving, it was requiſite to treat with the moſt cautious delicacy; and how could this be ſo well done, as by perſuading them it was not by a ſtranger, but by you?"

" Ah! Mr. Sydney," cried Emma, infinitely delighted, " how I envy you the plea-

ſure you muſt have felt on this occaſion! Many perſons do good; but few are thoſe who thus delicately attend to the feelings of the unfortunate."

"You forgive me, then."

"Forgive you! Is it poſſible you can have offended? Be aſſured I am more obliged to you than I can expreſs. You cannot imagine, however, how much I have been puzzled to develope this affair, and all the miſtakes it has occaſioned."

"I never intended to mention it, but I could not reſiſt your commands; ſtill, however, I intreat that it may remain a ſecret between ourſelves: indeed it is not worth mentioning; would to Heaven I could have done more!—But that I may no longer detain you, Madam, I will take my leave."—So ſaying, he departed.

Emma ſtood muſing inſtead of goi
to dreſs :—" So modeſt, ſo refined in h
ſentiments," ſaid ſhe, " with ſuch a fe
ing heart! Ah! Lord Miramont, you a
generous, but have you this delicac
How perfect would you be with yo
figure, talents, and vivacity, if you r
ſembled Sydney in character!"

CH

CHAP. II.

MA, having no occaſion to queſ-
howles, hardly ſpoke to him at the
rt; where, as uſual with him, he
ed her with his aſſiduities. Both
Miramont and Sydney were there;
ıe former did not approach her till
as waiting with her party to depart.
s he began to ſpeak to her, he was
upted by Lady Fredville; who,
ıg up to him, laid her hand on his
ſaying—"Do, Lord Miramont, go,
ſk for my ſervants: I am ſuffocated
s crowd."

inſtantly obeyed, but ſoon return-
ſaying, it was impoſſible ſhe could
way for ſome time, as there was a
t the door, and one carriage block-
› the way, ſo that no others could

Lady Fredville, after lamenting that ſhe had not come in her chair, was forced to ſubmit to delay; and, to amuſe herſelf, ſhe ſtood holding to her eye a ſmall glaſs, ſuſpended by a gold chain to her neck:—"Very pretty, indeed!" ſaid ſhe, quite loud, looking towards Emma:—"who is ſhe? I think, however, you once told me her name."

"Then I wonder you ſhould forget it," ſaid he, in a half-whiſper: "It is Miſs Mourtray."

"She is not much in the world, I fancy: I don't remember to have ſeen her any where but at the opera."

"Perhaps not; but ſhe is often with my aunt."

"Oh! I ſuppoſe ſhe is ſome ——ſhire girl; and Lady Wilmington thinks, therefore, ſhe muſt be civil to her."

"Upon

on my word, I believe, ſhe in-
ll thoſe who know her with the
being ſo; for ſhe is extremely
."

is, then, a favourite of your's?"
dy Fredville, affecting to ſmile.

ay, talk lower," ſaid he; "or
your ſubject;" obſerving Emma's
vered with bluſhes: and then he
omething elſe ſhe could not hear,
ich excited her curioſity not a lit-

tever unconcern Lady Fredville
ected, in her manner of queſtion-
Marquis, Emma yet fancied ſhe
er with ſomething like jealouſy;
dwelt with delight on the few
in her praiſe that had fallen from
. Though far from inſenſible
niration, ſhe was better pleaſed
ſhould think her modeſt and

amiable, than if he had more warmly commended her perſon.

Full of theſe ideas, ſhe was ſo abſent, that when Sydney, who had but juſt made his way to her, began addreſſing her, ſhe anſwered as if ſhe did not underſtand what he was ſaying.

Struck with this alteration in her manners, ſince the morning, and too much pained by it not to be anxious to diſcover the cauſe, he followed the direction of her eyes, and, with a ſevere pang, obſerved, that, however they might accidentally be attracted, they were ſure to reſt on Lord Miramont.

At the ball given by Chowles, he had remarked how animated ſhe ſeemed, when dancing with or ſitting by this formidable rival; for ſuch he conceived him to be, notwithſtanding his oſtenſible attachment to another. To draw her out

out of her reverie, he ventured to aſk, looking at Lord Miramont, who had now moved to ſome diſtance, and ſtood leaning againſt the wall, if ſhe did not think his figure very fine?

Emma ſtarted; but inſtantly recovering herſelf, anſwered, conciſely, "I believe it is reckoned ſo."

"You meet him often, I preſume, Madam, at Lady Wilmington's?"

"Sometimes:—but pray, Mr. Sydney, how did you like the concert?"

"Extremely. I have been told Lord Miramont ſings remarkably well: are you of this opinion, Miſs Mourtray?"

"I am no judge:—I wonder whether my brother has enquired after our carriage;" and, turning to her mother, ſhe aſked if ſhe did not wiſh to go home.

Mrs. Mourtray expreſſed no ſuch wiſh: ſhe was talking very faſt with ſeveral of her acquaintance, and, in anſwer to her daughter, only exclaimed—"Lord, no; it is quite early yet."

And Mrs. Prouting ſaid, ſhe ſhould expire with fright, if ſhe ſtirred before the confuſion at the door was quite over.

Much about the time that Lady Fredville's carriage was announced to be ready, Mrs. Mourtray conſented to depart; but Henry not appearing, having other things to mind than a mother and ſiſter, and Mrs. Prouting having ſeized her huſband's arm, Mrs. Mourtray, who was very helpleſs on all occaſions, was extremely glad to put herſelf under Sydney's care, who, however, offered his other arm to Emma; but the crowd not ſuffering them to paſs three a-breaſt, ſhe was forced to relinquiſh her hold, and get on as well as ſhe could.

Sydney,

Sydney, full of alarm, kept looking back every inſtant to ſee that ſhe was ſafe, bidding her keep cloſe, which ſhe managed to do, till Mrs. Mourtray, ſtumbling and loſing her ſhoe, Emma, whilſt he was ſtooping and aſſiſting her, was whirled away by a body of riotous footmen, ſo far as to loſe all ſight of her party.—Frightened, confuſed, and joſtled about, with flambeaux cloſe to her face; ſtunned with oaths, and forced to move forward, ſhe wiſhed moſt ardently to ſee any creature ſhe knew, that ſhe might cling to him for protection; when, at that inſtant, almoſt cloſe to her, ſhe perceived the Marquis, with Lady Fredville leaning on his arm, whilſt her huſband was clearing the way before them.

Almoſt involuntarily, Emma exclaimed, "Oh! Lord Miramont, aſſiſt me!"

"Good God! Miſs Mourtray!"—cried he, diſengaging his arm from Lady Fred-

ville's hold, "in the name of God, how came you here alone?"

Without waiting for an answer, and leaving Lady Fredville to the care of her Lord, he seized Emma's hand, and soon got her from amid the throng; and she was making him a thousand acknowledgments, when Sydney, all at once, running up to them, looking half frantic, "Thank Heaven! thank God! I have found you!" cried he; "poor Mrs. Mourtray is almost in fits with terror."

"Where, where?" cried Emma.

"Take hold of my arm," said he; "come along; I will see you safe."

Lord Miramont then resigned her to Sydney's care, who hurried her up the Haymarket, and assisted her into the carriage, where Mrs. Mourtray and her party were already placed.—Much as Emma had been alarmed, she would have thought

thought this one of the happieſt moments of her life, if Sydney had not arrived ſo *mal-à-propós*, and been ſo officious in releaſing her from Lord Miramont's care, who, for *her* ſake, had left Lady Fredville!

Poor Sydney, therefore, received very cold thanks for his trouble, when he bade her adieu; and he could not help thinking himſelf ſingularly unfortunate, that he, who had ſo early felt her merit, who lived only to adore her, ſhould ſee no chance of ever making any favourable impreſſion upon her, whilſt the object of her preference, though undoubtedly ſuperior to him in ſome reſpects, could, at leaſt, only offer her a divided heart. He perſuaded himſelf he ſhould be leſs wretched if this preference regarded any other man than Lord Miramont; for it ſeemed to him inconſiſtent with the purity of Emma's principles, to be prepoſſeſſed in favour, if not of a libertine, certainly (to uſe the

mildeſt term) of a man of very relaxed morals.

Yet, in deſpite of theſe reflections, Sydney had no inclination to break his fetters:—far from it; but he reſolved, in ſilence, humbly to adore, and watch, like a guardian angel, over his beloved Emma.

Mrs. Mourtray was no ſooner relieved from her terrible apprehenſions concerning her daughter, than ſhe began enquiring what had occaſioned her ſtaying ſo long behind, and lamenting that good Mr. Chowles had been obliged, from indiſpoſition, to retire early, otherwiſe all theſe diſtaſters, ſhe ſaid, would not have happened.

Emma could give no other account of herſelf, than that ſhe had been ſeparated from her by the crowd; adding, ſhe believed, ſhe ſhould have ſunk with terror, had

had ſhe not moſt fortunately met with Lord Miramont."

"Why, it was Mr. Sydney that put you into the coach," ſaid Mrs. Mourtray.

"True, Madam; but he did not find me till Lord Miramont had extricated me from my difficulties."—And then, pleading fatigue, ſhe remained ſilent, with his image hovering in her fancy. The trifling ſervice ſhe had received from him, though no more than what any other gentleman would have done, ſhe choſe to magnify; becauſe her eye, in fact, was faſcinated by his air of faſhion and figure; and, imperceptibly, notions of vanity and ambition were gaining ground in her mind, where, probably, the latter at leaſt never would have had acceſs, had ſhe remained unknown to the Wilmington family.

The following Sunday, Emma received a note from Lady Bell in a ſtyle of affection, ſhe

ſhe had never uſed ſince ſhe had ventured to blame her for encouraging Darnford's attentions unknown to her parents. —She concluded her note with theſe lines :——

" Mamma and ſiſter ſpend this day in the country. Papa choſe I ſhould ſtay with him ; and I am condemned to bear the weight of Madame *du Plomb's* company, unleſs you take pity on me. Indeed, it would be real charity if you and Mrs. Mourtray would call after church, and take me with you to Kenſington gardens. A certain perſon, who ſhall be nameleſs, is now engaged on Tower duty.—Laſt night I won two guineas and a half at commerce, which I deſtine for your poor emigrants.

" Adieu ! I depend upon your compliance, my ſweet Emma, with the wiſh of

" Your very faithful and affectionate

" ISABELLA FONTELIEU."

Emma,

mma, though no longer blind to her
nd's faults, ſtill loved her enough to
ice [illegible] his renewal of kindneſs; and,
:h pleaſed at her remembrance of the
grants, ſhe haſtened, with her mo-
's approbation, to aſſure her they
ıld call for her.

'o the gardens, therefore, they went:
beauty of the day brought all the
ld there, from all parts of the town;
though, amid ſuch a concourſe of
ple, there were many beautiful wo-
ı, none appeared more lovely than
na and Lady Bell. The latter, how-
; attracted the moſt attention, not
ı her ſuperior beauty, but on account
:r ſingular ſtyle of dreſs, which indu-
numbers to ſtop and gaze at her;
lſt a ſet of forward young men, ad-
ng both, followed their ſteps, and,
he freedom of their remarks, abaſhed
ma far more than they gratified her
ty by their commendations. Though

not

not exempt from failings, her native modeſty and delicacy remained unimpaired.

Whilſt her eyes were caſt downwards, and her cheeks ſuffuſed in bluſhes, Lady Bell, with unaltered countenance, returned ſtare for ſtare, and without the leaſt diſcompoſure, liſtened to the moſt hyperbolical flattery. Both ſhe and Mrs. Mourtray were delighted with the crowd that followed them; the latter, becauſe her maternal pride exulted in obſerving the effects of her daughter's charms.

They had now been up and down the faſhionable walk, when they met Darnford. Emma, diſagreeably ſurprized, caſt a reproachful look at Lady Bell, who only laughed, and ſaid to him, "Do you know, I made Emma believe that you were at the Tower?"

"Why ſo, Madam?"

"O!

" O! I can't tell you now.—But why did you come ſo late?"

He made her an anſwer, in a low voice, and they continued converſing together, unmindful of their party. Two Ladies of Mrs. Mourtray's acquaintance joining her, ſhe walked between them; and, before her, the young Ladies and Darnford.

But Lady Bell now wiſhing leſs for public obſervation, and deſirous of avoiding ſome of her mother's friends, propoſed keeping along the gravel walk, by the ſide of the Park, which was quite deſerted, in compariſon of that where all the fine world were aſſembled; and Emma's preſence being a little reſtraint on her private converſation with Darnford, ſhe diverted herſelf, occaſionally, with ridiculing all the odd figures ſhe ſaw. It was in vain that Emma tried to check her; for Darnford, encouraging her by laughing,

ing, ſhe continued her criticiſms alou
without the leaſt reſerve.

Amongſt other ſtrange figures, ſhe h
noticed, once or twice, a tall raw-bon
man, with a very tight old-faſhioned ſto
which, with a coat extremely low in t
collar, and falling off his ſhoulders, c
covered, to full view, his long ſcrag
neck.

"For Heaven's ſake!" cried La
Bell, "look at that figure before us!
Now really that is a *quiz*, beyond p
miſſion!"

"Pray," ſaid the man, turning fierc
round, and ſtanding ſtill; "pray, who l
licenſed *you* to decide what is, or wh
is not permitted?"

Lady Bell, thunderſtruck at this u
expected addreſs, pulling Emma alo
darted on the turf to get out of his w

was equally nimble; and, ex-
his arms to prevent her paſſing,
ſo faſt," ſaid he: "hitherto you
nuſed yourſelf with laughing at
eyond permiſſion, (mimicking her),
w I think it very fair to have my
th you."

ford, with a furious oath, and
him a rough puſh, bid him go
and not preſume to obſtruct the

, Mr. Redcoat, you mean, do you,
he part of champion?" ſaid the
but my buſineſs is not with you:
ith this gaudy thing, without a
or ſcarcely a petticoat; with pro-
ces, ſwelled by pride...."

Darnford interrupted his harangue,
g to ſeize him by the collar; but
n, being much the ſtrongeſt, he
y prevented his purpoſe, by a
ſudden

ſudden jerk of his arm, but, while Darnford was purſuing him, as he was making towards the *ha-ha!* the man, after ſwinging him round, tumbled him into it; and then, with extraordinary agility, made his eſcape over it into the Park.

The young Ladies, during this tranſaction, which was over in an inſtant, made the beſt uſe they could of their legs; but the elderly Ladies, not being able to keep up with them, ſoon ſlackened their pace, when the cauſe of their alarm ceaſed, much wondering what had occaſioned this odd ſcuffle; and Darnford having ſcrambled out of the ditch, they all proceeded in ſearch of the young Ladies.

Theſe had taken refuge in one of the covered ſeats, which, fortunately, they found empty; and neither, for ſome inſtants, could ſpeak, from terror and want of breath: but Lady Bell, now believing herſelf ſafe, gave a looſe to anger:—

"Such

" Such a monſtrous outrage," ſhe ſaid, " ſhe believed was without example!— Such a brute!—ſuch a wretch, as that man with the ſcragged neck, never exiſted!"

Emma patiently heard her; firmly, however, reſolving, that no conſideration, not even the ſanction of her mother's preſence, ſhould induce her again to accompany her into the gardens. At length, Lady Bell's anger being a little cooled, ſhe recollected Darnford's involuntary exit, which ſet her a laughing, and ſhe became curious to know what was become of him. She, therefore, propoſed to ſally forth in ſearch of their party; but Emma ſaid, ſhe thought it would be very imprudent without a *Chaperon*, or any man to protect them, to begin rambling anew; and, while ſhe was yet ſpeaking, the Ladies and Darnford appearing in ſight, ſhe and her companion joined them.

" Bleſs

" Bleſs me!" cried Mrs. Mo
" what a fright I have been in!-
to this minute, I don't know how
happened."

" Aſk Lady Iſabella, Madam,'
Darnford; who, ſullen and enrage
not yet opened his lips:—" aſk he
can beſt explain it."

" Pardon me," ſaid Lady Bell;
are the fit perſon, Mr. Darnford
cauſe you inveſtigated the matter
bottom."

Darnford coloured, and muttere
words raſcal, &c.

Lady Bell then, in her own way
lated to Mrs. Mourtray her adven
adding, " Did you ever hear of
impertinence?—Such a vulgar-loo
fellow to dare ſuch an inſult to a wo
of my rank!"

" I

"I can't think what could provoke him to it," ſaid Mrs. Mourtray.

"La!—nothing but a little joke of mine, at his *quizzical* figure."

Mrs. Mourtray looked grave; but expreſſed ſome aſtoniſhment, that ſuch low ill-behaved perſons were permitted to enter the gardens. Lady Bell then, turning to Darnford, aſked how he had recovered his legs.

"Upon my word, Madam," anſwered Darnford, "in fighting your battles I got into a confounded ſcrape: curſe the brute; but, if I had him here, I would give him a pretty good horſe-whipping, I promiſe you."

"You muſt certainly fight this man," cried ſhe; "but take care to ſtipulate with him, that it ſhall not be near a ditch;"

ditch;" and ſhe burſt out into a violen fit of laughter.

"Fight a blackguard!" exclaimed Darnford, biting his lips, and provoked beyond endurance; "fight him, indeed! I wiſh Ladies would talk leſs, and never of what they do not underſtand."

The company now ſeparated, and left the gardens; Darnford, with very ill grace, ſeeing the Ladies to Mrs. Mourtray's carriage; and Lady Bell, much out of humour, was ſet down in Groſvenor Square.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

WHEN Emma, on her return home, had leiſure to reflect on the occurrences of the morning, ſhe could not help wondering, more than ever, at the impropriety of Lady Bell's whole behaviour, and that any attachment ſhould ſubſiſt between her and the Captain. It was plain ſhe could have no real affection for this man, whom ſhe had tried to mortify by her ſatirical ſpeeches; and ſhe obſerved that his temper was extremely irritable; though ſhe allowed, that the ill ſucceſs which had attended the diſplay of his proweſs, and the humiliation he had received in the preſence of Lady Bell, afforded ſome excuſe for his ill humour: yet ſtill he was, in no reſpect, a ſuitable match for her, being neither ſupported by rank, fortune, nor character. She

knew that Lady Bell might, at this ti
be married to a man of high faſhion
fortune, and ſo univerſally eſteemed
unexceptionable in every reſpect, th
though her father always hinted he h
ſecret views of his own for her eſtabl
ment, it ſeemed very probable, that, in
favour of this perſon, he would wave
them; but ſhe treated him ſo capriciouſly
that he ſeemed inclined to withdraw hi
addreſſes.

Emma now thought, that as Darnford
and Lady Bell had parted in the morn-
ing mutually piqued againſt each other,
that, if ever ſhe could be perſuaded to
break with him, this was the moment.—
Deſirous, therefore, of talking this matter
over with her, before her diſpleaſure had
time to cool, ſhe aſked her mother, who
was going out in the evening, to let her
paſs an hour with Lady Bell, to which
Mrs. Mourtray aſſented; only obſerving,
ſhe was a ſtrange girl, and that ſhe ſhould

be

be very ſorry to ſee Emma reſemble her in behaviour.

When Emma arrived in Groſvenor Square, ſhe found Lady Bell and her Governeſs in the drawing-room: the latter dozing over a large folio, which looked like ſermons, and the former employed in drawing caricatures; but, throwing down her pencil upon Emma's appearance, and ſcreaming for joy, "Well, this is delightful, indeed!" cried ſhe, "I little expected to ſee you! Mamma and ſiſter don't return till to-morrow. Come, ſit down: you are quite charming."

Emma, after a little chat, longed to enter upon the ſubject that occupied her thoughts; yet ſhe was a good deal embarraſſed how ſhe ſhould manage, to avoid offending Lady Bell, and to induce her to liſten, with patience, to what ſhe might ſtyle an officious remonſtrance.

But Lady Bell herſelf opened the
and, having forgotten her reſent
againſt Darnford for his laſt ſpeec
began talking of him; till, ſudden
collecting herſelf, ſhe ſtopped; and
coaxing manner, ſaid:—" Do, my
Madame *du Plomb*, take that pon
book into the next room: there its e
will not be counteracted by our
prattle; and, as the door ſhall re
open, between your ſlumbers you m
that I am ſafe here; for I know
are ordered never to loſe ſight of
The complaiſant Governeſs did a
was deſired.

" Now the room is lightened,"
Lady Bell, " we will reſume our ſul
and I will, without reſerve, tell
on what footing Darnford ſtands
me."

" Excuſe my being your confid
ſaid Emma: " I have already ſee
n

much; and I confeſs my buſineſs here, to-night, is to try and open your eyes on the unworthineſs of this man, and to conjure you to have nothing more to ſay to him."

"What are your objections to him, pray?"

"Your own good ſenſe, I ſhould imagine, Lady Bell, muſt render it needleſs for me to point them out. You muſt have heard that he is a gambler; and, in every reſpect, a very indifferent character; moreover, I firmly believe, it is leſs your perſon than your fortune that attracts him."

"I ſhould think," anſwered Lady Bell, ſmiling, conceitedly, "that this little perſon of mine might be loved for itſelf alone; but I grant, nevertheleſs, that I ſhould be a vaſt match for Darnford; yet

I am not at all clear that I ſhall n
him: I rather think not."

"I am extremely happy to hea
then, for God's ſake, diſmiſs hi
once."

"Not ſo faſt," cried Lady Bell; '
ſo faſt:—O! you have no idea of th
of a little ſnug flirtation! How it b
the dull *routine* of life, and...."

"Fie, fie, Lady Bell, you canno
ſerious, I am ſure."

"Indeed I am; it is vaſtly dive
to ſee him walking up and dow
ſquare, with his arms folded, lookii
diculouſly piteous; then I peep thr
the blinds, and give him an encour
nod; he does not dare bow, for fe
mother, or ſomebody elſe, ſhould ſe
from ſome other window; but he v
and ſmiles. Well, then, we have

pretty contrivances; but—no, no; I will tell you no more, for fear you ſhould betray me."

"My good Heaven! is it poſſible, Lady Bell, you can be ſo indiſcreet, and for a man that you are even doubtful whether you ſhall marry? Who poſſeſſes not one quality to attach a reaſonable creature! Think, I conjure you, what this very man himſelf muſt think of you!"

"Think of me? why, that I have very good eyes, and do juſtice to his perfections."

"But leſs juſtice to your own character; and, if ever you ſhould marry him, will he not recollect this behaviour to your diſadvantage?"

"Whatever his thoughts may be, he ſhall not dare communicate them to me.

When I marry, I ſhall firſt preſcribe upon what terms; two of the conditions ſhall be, no lectures, and perfect liberty."

"Should a man agree to theſe terms, how can you depend upon his keeping them? But, to leave this idle converſation, ſuffer me to remind you, that if Lord and Lady Wilmington ſhould have the leaſt ſuſpicion of an affair, which, permit me to ſay, is highly diſgraceful to you, their reſentment would be violent; I tremble only to think of the conſequences.

"Pho! pho! there is no fear of their knowing any thing of the matter. They depend entirely on Madame *du Plomb's* vigilance; and ſhe is ſo deaf and ſtupid, that I make her believe whatever I pleaſe. As for Darnford, his own intereſt makes him very cautious."

"Why,

"Why, why;" cried Emma warmly, "why will you truſt him? Let me," continued ſhe, preſſing her hand, "beſeech you, my dear Lady Bell, to break off this clandeſtine affair; what is paſt cannot be retrieved, but proceed no further; indeed I love you too much, not to warn you of your danger, when I ſee you on the brink of ruin."

"Nonſenſe!" cried Lady Bell; "you take every thing ſeriouſly, and my rattle for goſpel."

"Have you, then, only been jeſting all this time?" cried Emma eagerly—"Would I could think ſo; but your frequent walks with...."

Here ſhe was interrupted by the ſudden entrance of Lord Wilmington, who exclaimed—"Miſs Mourtray! I am moſt agreeably ſurpriſed; I thought Bell had been alone."

"I am going this inſtant," ſaid ſhe, courteſying, and moving towards the bell.

"Nay, nay; do not let me drive you away," ſaid he, ſtopping her: "I am ſo happy, ſo delighted, I am, upon my honour, when I ſee you .... do, dear Bell, ſtep into the library and fetch my ſnuff-box; I have left papers of importance on the table, or I would ſend a ſervant.

"How charmingly you look, Miſs Mourtray!"

"We will go down together," ſaid Emma: "Good night, Lord Wilmington."—And away they both went.

"Upon my word," ſaid Lady Bell, burſting into a laugh, "Papa had contrived for himſelf a little ſnug tête-à-tête, of which you maliciouſly diſappointed him. Old and young, you ſee, Emma, are

are all alike; Cupid deals about to the right and left."

"I flattered myſelf," ſaid Emma, gravely, "to have left you in a more ſerious diſpoſition, and I am grieved to be miſtaken. Good night, Lady Bell."

"And good night, ſweet Emma—but ſtop—one word before you go: I wiſh to aſk you a queſtion; no joke, I promiſe you."

"Well, what is it?"

"Tell me, when you dream, do you ever fancy yourſelf Marchioneſs of Miramont?"

"Lady Bell! what can you mean?"

"Rather let me aſk you what *you* mean? and, *entre nous*, my dear, if it is abſurd for Lady Iſabella Fontelieu to

think of *poor* Captain Darnford, is it not equally ſo for *you* ..... fill up the ſentence as you pleaſe, and now farewell." —As ſhe finiſhed theſe words, ſhe ran away laughing.

No words can expreſs Emma's confuſion; her legs tottered as ſhe moved towards the carriage, hardly knowing what ſhe did; ſhe got into it, and, flinging herſelf back, ſhe burſt into tears.

"Good Heaven!" ſhe cried, "is it poſſible that my weakneſs ſhould be thus clear? Am I become, then, the ſubject of even Lady Bell's ſport? I ſhall now never dare look at Lord Miramont, leſt he, likewiſe, ſhould perceive, what I hoped was known only to myſelf."

Recollecting, however, that Lady Bel often ſpoke without any meaning, an that this ſpiteful ſpeech might be a mer random ſhot, uttered in revenge for he goo

good advice, and not in conſequence of any obſervations ſhe had made on her behaviour to the Marquis,—ſhe endeavoured to tranquillize her mind.

Conſcious of having acted a friendly part towards this light girl, who, ſhe apprehended, was more entangled than ſhe herſelf even owned, ſhe reſolved, after hearing her avow principles that ſhe deteſted, no longer to cheriſh her friendſhip.

Lady Bell's words, however, made a deep impreſſion on Emma's mind; and thence aroſe a train of reflections that had never before, or only tranſiently, paſſed through her thoughts. The birth, fortune, and elevated rank of Lord Miramont ſhe had not hitherto conſidered as inſurmountable obſtacles in the way of her wiſhes; his unfortunate attachment had appeared the chief. But, now, ſhe blamed herſelf for preſuming to look ſo high;

high; and half reſolved ſhe would conquer a partiality unbecoming to her ſituation.

But the firſt time ſhe ſaw the Marquis after this prudent reſolution, it began to waver; for vanity ſuggeſted, that, though not of an illuſtrious, ſhe was of a very ancient, honourable family; that, in marriage, as the huſband conferred, but did not gain, rank, he would not degrade himſelf, if ever he honoured her with the offer of his hand; and, as to fortune, *that* was too trifling a conſideration, to a generous mind, to have any weight with him. Yet much as ſhe loved Lord Miramont, her diſapprobation of his principles concerning gallantry continued as firm as ever; nor did ſhe wiſh to become his wife, unleſs he thoroughly reformed his conduct.

While Emma, with little or no reſiſtance, thus indulged her partiality for Lord

Lord Miramont, Sydney, on his ſide, became daily more in love with her; not owing to any encouragement ſhe gave him, but to the opportunities he had of becoming more intimately acquainted with the excellence of her underſtanding, and the goodneſs of her heart.

Mourtray evidently encouraged his viſits; and even his wife tolerated them with better grace than formerly. An unfortunate circumſtance interrupted her uſual mode of life; for ſhe was ſeized with a rheumatic gout, which confined her firſt for a few days to her bed, and for a much longer time to her houſe.

It often happened, during this melancholy period, that her friends were too much buſied with their own engagements to call upon her; and ſhe would have been condemned to a family party, but for Chowles and Sydney, who almoſt

ever

every evening paſſed a part of it with her.

The lovely Emma was the magnet that attracted them both; ſhe never left her mother, unleſs when ſhe had a party; and then Mrs. Mourtray inſiſted upon her going out, that ſhe might gather news, and be furniſhed with matter for her entertainment.

Sydney, who poſſeſſed much information, and an elegantly cultivated mind, could adapt his converſation to every capacity; he, therefore, frequently entertained Mrs. Mourtray extremely; and he was ſo well bred, good humoured, and anxious to pleaſe her, that, almoſt in deſpite of herſelf, ſhe acknowledged that he was a very agreeable companion: yet ſhe remained immoveable in her wiſh of ſeeing her daughter married to Chowles, on account of the ſuperiority of his fortune.

When

Whenever Sydney made her a viſit, ſhe was always happy if Emma happened to be abſent; and very averſe that ſhe ſhould ſtir out, if ſhe expected Chowles. Guarded as the former was in his behaviour, ſhe had long noticed his attachment to her daughter; and, in thoſe moments when ſhe believed it would be hopeleſs, ſhe was diſpoſed to pity him; but if ever Emma ſhewed him more than common civility, this immediately rouſed her apprehenſions that her daughter's heart might be moved by his perſevering attentions.

She could not forbear communicating her thoughts on this ſubject to her huſband: "I hope," ſaid ſhe, "that Sydney's frequent viſits will not be attended with diſagreeable conſequences; for you muſt (even abſent as you are) have obſerved, that he is dying for love of Emma."

"I wiſh,

"I wiſh, with all my heart," an
he, "that I ſaw any ſymptoms
ſide, of partiality towards him;
more I know of that young m
more I admire him. Emma nev
chooſe a perſon that I ſhould pr
Sydney for *my* ſon-in-law."

"How amazing! You never ſ
recollect, my dear, that at preſent
ſcarcely bread; and that, at the b
will never be more than a poo
One of the worſt things a man c
for his rank will not allow him
with the privacy of a plain Gent
therefore, with an equal fortune
not ſo well off."

"Granted—But Sydney will
moderate fortune; and, perhaps, y
may have ſome faint recollection c
days, when you and I, with ab
quarter as much, thought ourſel
happieſt of beings; *you* did not *th*

ider fortune as the *only* conſideration worth attending to in marriage."

Mrs. Mourtray coloured: "Bleſs me!" cried ſhe, "any body would ſuppoſe, to hear you, that I was become quite an altered creature! I never ſaid money was the *only* conſideration, though it is one of the moſt eſſential; if, upon Lady Clanarmon's death, Sydney was to ſtep at once into the whole of her fortune, I ſhould ſay nothing againſt him; but I know, and he did not deny it, when I aſked him, that it is his intention equally to ſhare his future inheritance with his brother. A moſt romantic idea; and, I hope, you will allow this quite alters your ſtatement of things."

"Do you ſuppoſe," ſaid Mourtray, ſmiling, "this noble trait of his character, which you call romantic, can have any other effect upon me, than to make me wiſh the more for his alliance? He will

will ſtill have enough left to ſatisfy a reaſonable perſon; but were his fortune, by what he thinks an act of juſtice, reduced even below mediocrity, I would ſooner give my child to a man of ſuch an upright mind, than to the richeſt man in the kingdom, if he were not deſerving of her."

"He is certainly generous, and all that," ſaid Mrs. Mourtray; "but, then, look at his face!"

"Nonſenſe! Did not you own yourſelf, the other day, that there was ſuch goodneſs imprinted on it, that you ſometimes almoſt thought him handſome?"

"No, no; I only ſaid I forgot, when he has been uncommonly pleaſant, that he was ugly."

"A good countenance never alters, which is not the caſe with fine features; how-

however, it is impoſſible that Sydney's face ſhould ever diſguſt any ſenſible woman; and his figure is extremely well."

"But Emma does not love him; that alone is a ſufficient objection."

"She may hereafter; and certainly is ſtill leſs partial to your friend Mr. Chowles, who has nothing to recommend him but his wealth."

"Yet, I tell you fairly, Mr. Mourtray, I would give the world to ſee her married to him. What a figure ſhe would make, with her uncommon beauty, covered with jewels! How ſhe would adorn his houſe and table . . ."

"And how his coarſe manners," interrupted Mourtray, "would make her bluſh! No, my dear, he never would do for her; and, as I think ſo differently from you, in regard to both theſe perſons, I do

do intreat that you will ſay nothing to Emma about either: in a matter of ſo much importance to her future happineſs, I wiſh her choice to be free and uninfluenced by us."

Mrs. Mourtray, though not without reluctance, promiſed to comply with his requeſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

NOTHING now was talked of but a maſquerade, to be given in a private houſe. The preparations making for this were ſaid to be ſuperb; and great intereſt was made to procure tickets, which were very ſcarce, as the company was limited to a certain number, proportioned to the ſize of the houſe.

Emma, who had never ſeen a maſquerade, and her mother, who had ſeen many, equally longed to ſee this: but the latter, to her great mortification, was ſtill a cripple; and the hopes of the former of getting tickets, were not very ſanguine, not having the leaſt acquaintance with the lady who was to give the maſquerade; ſhe had, however, frequently

quently hinted her wiſhes to thoſe wh might have ſome intereſt with her, b hitherto without effect.

The evening before *that* fixed for th important affair, as ſhe was ſitting work with her mother, with no oth company than Sydney, who was readin aloud a new novel to amuſe Mrs. Mou tray, a letter was brought to Emm which, the ſervant ſaid, required no an ſwer, and that the chairman who left was gone.

To give her leiſure to read it, Sydne laid down the book. "Pſhaw! 'tis noth ing but a begging letter, I dare ſay," cried Mrs. Mourtray, diſliking the in terruption. Emma, however, tearing it open, was agreeably ſurprized at the ſight of two maſquerade tickets. After many exclamations of delight, both the Ladies began conjecturing whence theſe treaſures came, for the direction was i

an unknown hand, and the ſeal only a wafer.

"This is a piece of gallantry of Mr. Chowles, I fancy," ſaid Mrs. Mourtray."

Emma could not agree to this; her ſuſpicions reſted on a very different perſon, but whom ſhe did not chooſe to name. This idea, however, rendered the preſent doubly welcome. She reminded her mother, who ſtill inſiſted it muſt be Chowles, that, in the morning, he had bitterly inveighed againſt the ingratitude of the lady who had peremptorily refuſed him a ticket, though ſhe had been invited to his ball.—The book, of courſe, was opened no more, and conſultations were held concerning the dreſs and *chaperon* ſhe muſt immediately provide for the occaſion: but as Sydney could be of no uſe in theſe, he took his leave with the more reluctance, for this was his fare-

well viſit, having promiſed his brother, who was now in quarters in Canterbury, to be with him the next day. Lady Wilmington, Emma knew, intended going to the maſquerade; ſhe, therefore, diſpatched a note directly to her, requeſting to have the honour of being of her Ladyſhip's party, which, for many reaſons, ſhe preferred to all others. She obtained no anſwer till the following morning, when ſhe received a very laconic refuſal, written by Lady Wilmington's groom of the chambers, who, with a cold apology, informed her that her Ladyſhip's party was already full.

Extremely diſappointed, and not a little angry, Emma conſidered what the motive could be of this rude and diſobliging behaviour; for it had ſo happened, that ſhe had never ſeen her ſince the day ſhe had accompanied her to the auction. Emma, indeed, remembered ſhe was then in a very ill humour,

mour, owing to her diſappointment concerning the china; but, as Chowles, and not ſhe, was the offender, ſhe could not ſuppoſe Lady Wilmington harboured reſentment againſt her.

It was, nevertheleſs, this ſilly incident that occaſioned her refuſal; for, having twice been provoked by the audacity of Chowles, when ſhe had taken Emma out with her, ſhe firmly reſolved that on an occaſion when greater freedoms are uſed, than on any other, not to expoſe herſelf anew to the chance of meeting this dreadful man, who ſo aſſiduouſly followed Emma's ſteps.

Diſappointed, therefore, of the *chaperon* ſhe wiſhed, Emma now conſulted her mother, to whom ſhe ſhould apply next. She ſtrongly recommended Mrs. Prouting, who had repeatedly ſaid—"How much ſhe languiſhed to ſee this maſquerade; and thought it mighty odd,

that a perſon of her faſhion and figure had not yet been able to procure a ſingle ticket!"

Nothing but the ſhortneſs of the time, that obliged her to decide ſpeedily, induced Emma to acquieſce with this recommendation, to which ſhe felt the utmoſt reluctance; however, ſhe engaged Mrs. Prouting, giving her the ſpare ticket.

This Lady, who had before been almoſt in a ſtate of deſpair, received it with rapture; and, totally blind to any defects in her perſon, ſhe prepared to decorate it with ſuch a profuſion of fanciful ornaments, that Emma trembled to think how completely ridiculous ſhe would appear; and how many unpleaſant ſenſations ſhe herſelf ſhould feel by being thus accompanied.

In vain ſhe tried, with all poſſible delicacy, to perſuade her to make herſelf a leſs conſpicuous figure:—Mrs. Prouting only heard her with diſpleaſure. She then reſolved to adopt more than uſual ſimplicity in her own dreſs, that her taſte might not be confounded with that of her companion.—A white gauſe dreſs, that fitted her ſhape to perfection, and with no other ornament to her face than her own fine hair, arranged by herſelf,—ſtrikingly contraſted with Mrs. Prouting's gaudy appearance;—ſhe looked, however, moſt uncommonly lovely. Late in the evening ſhe received two more tickets, likewiſe, from an unknown perſon; one of theſe ſhe beſtowed on Mr. Prouting, and the other on her brother. Theſe Gentlemen attended the Ladies, and removed ſome little timid apprehenſions which Emma felt, when ſhe thought ſhe ſhould only have been under Mrs. Prouting's protection.

It may eaſily be imagined, that a ſcene ſo novel to her as a maſquerade could not fail of delighting her; but after the firſt *coup d'œil*, her whole thoughts were bent on diſcovering Lord Miramont; and ſhe paid little attention to all the unmeaning nonſenſe ſhe was aſſailed with from all quarters; even the encomiums beſtowed on her figure, at that moment, touched her little, for they did not come from the right perſon.

She had now been through all the rooms without finding any maſk that ſeemed, in perſon, to reſemble Lord Miramont, which much damped her vivacity; whilſt her companion, who wandered about with a vacant mind, unengaged in any purſuit, laughed and talked indiſcriminately with all thoſe who would attend to her; and, to Emma's great ſurpriſe, a dance being on the point of beginning, Mrs. Prouting declared ſhe would join in

it

it with a Harlequin, who ſtood capering near her.

"Do you know, Madam," aſked Emma, "your intended partner?"

"No; but what ſignifies? If he can dance, that's enough for me: you'll dance too, I hope."

As Mrs. Prouting ſpoke very loud, two maſks heard her; they had ſometime been diverting themſelves with her abſurd figure and manner, and, likewiſe, in admiring the graceful form of her companion: both now ſtepped forward, eagerly ſoliciting the hand of the latter.

But Emma had no idea of engaging herſelf to dance with ſtrangers; and, civilly declining their offers, ſhe took hold of Mr. Prouting's arm, ſaying, ſhe would place herſelf under his protection till the dance was over; and then propoſed to

him to ſit down, as fortunately a ſofa near the door was at that inſtant vacated.

Hopeleſs of finding amuſement in converſing with him, who, ſhe knew, by ſad experience, only acted the part of Echo in ſociety, his mind being a perfect blank, ſhe ſought to divert herſelf with liſtening to others; but the ſqueaking and feigned voices, added to the noiſe of the muſic, prevented her hearing more than broken ſentences of very unintereſting ſtuff.

Juſt then a fine tall figure, habited like a Turk, entered the room; and, after caſting a look around, as if in ſearch of ſome particular object, approached her, ſaying—"The nut-brown maid!—I am ſure!—who elſe has ſuch a lovely form!"

Although the voice was diſguiſed, and the maſk ſuch as to ſhew no part of the face, yet the height and figure of the Turk

Turk ſeemed to correſpond with *that* which was uppermoſt in her thoughts; her heart was in a tumult of delight, though mingled with apprehenſion that the maſk might not be Lord Miramont: with a faltering voice, therefore, ſhe ſaid —" It is very poſſible I may not be unknown to you, though I diſclaim the compliment you are pleaſed to make me."

" Your modeſty," ſaid he, " is not the leaſt of your perfections."

And then, with great civility, he aſked Mr. Prouting if it would not be poſſible to make room for him on the ſofa.

Prouting, who had heard his addreſs to Emma, concluding him to be known to her, immediately drew cloſer into the corner; ſhe moved a little nearer to him, and the Turk ſeated himſelf by her on the other ſide.

" I thought myſelf very fortunate," ſaid he, " when, after much difficulty, I was enabled laſt night to have the honour of ſending you two tickets."

" I ſuſpected," ſaid ſhe, " whence they came, and acknowledge myſelf much obliged to whoever ſent them."

" Talk not of obligations," cried he: " I fairly own I was not diſintereſted in wiſhing you here; for I have long been anxious to have an opportunity of communicating to you ſomething of the utmoſt importance."

Emma was all ear, ſcarcely breathing, ſo afraid was ſhe of loſing a word, as the Turk ſpoke extremely low.

" My happineſs," continued he, " depends entirely upon you; and, though you ſeem to ſuppoſe you know who ſent

you

the tickets, it is poſſible you may be
ıken."

nma ſtarted:—"Then we are not,"
ſhe, "upon equal terms; before this
erſation proceeds further, I muſt in-
pon knowing who you are."

Would to Heaven," cried he, "your
ıgs were in uniſon with mine!—then
heart would already have informed
Can you not, however, recollect
: man amongſt your acquaintance,
ſe eyes, whoſe manners, though not
tongue, have told you a thouſand
s that he adores you?"

nma, who had ſometimes flattered
lf that Lord Miramont regarded her
partiality, applied this ſketch to his
uct; to which ſhe thought it bore ſo
g a reſemblance, that again ſhe felt
ed it was *he* himſelf, who thus
ed what ſhe heard with the moſt

exquiſite pleaſure.—Timidity, however, ſealed her lips.

" Will you not ſpeak to me, charming creature," ſaid the Turk: " tell me, at leaſt, that you hear me without diſpleaſure. If I could but hope for pity and pardon, then, indeed—but, no; I dare not, in this dreadful uncertainty of your ſentiments—I dare not diſcover myſelf."

Theſe extraordinary apprehenſions, in the ſuppoſed Lord Miramont, ſeemed to Emma ſo unneceſſary, that ſhe felt little diſpoſed to encourage him; ſhe, therefore, only coolly ſaid—" Expect no anſwer from me; tell me your name, and then I ſhall know what to ſay."

" I would tell it inſtantly," replied he, " if I did not apprehend you would fly from me. Certain unfortunate ſhackles, which, if you know me, you muſt be ſenſible it is not in my power to break, alone

alone prevent me from openly acknowledging the tender adoration I feel for you."

Emma's amazement and indignation, when ſhe heard him thus avowing, in the ſame breath, a paſſion for her, and that he was entangled in an intrigue with Lady Fredville, which he had not the reſolution to break, deprived her of the power of ſpeech; and the Turk, auguring well of her ſilence, added:—

"If I dared hope that your mind would riſe ſuperior to idle prejudices—then indeed, ſweet Emma, I might be bleſſed with your love, and be the happieſt of men; but . . . ."

"Dare not," cried ſhe, haughtily, "to inſult my ears a moment longer;" and, forgetting that ſhe was not to be ſuppoſed to know the Turk, ſhe added, with the greateſt emotion, riſing from her

ſeat—

ſeat—" Indeed, I little thought your Lordſhip capable of...."

" Ha! you know me then!" interrupted the Turk; but Emma, without attending to him, took hold of Mr. Prouting's arm:—" Let us begone, Sir," ſaid ſhe; " this room is too warm for me."

The Turk did not attempt to ſtop her:—" I ſee you are angry," whiſpered he, " yet I rely upon your prudence for ſecrecy."

" Merciful Heaven!" ſaid Emma to herſelf, as ſoon as ſhe had eſcaped from him; " is *this* the man to whom I have been ſo partial?—and *thus* does he declare what I thought would make me ſo happy to hear? Thank God! my eyes are now open, and never, no, never will I beſtow another thought upon him."

Much

Much as ſhe had been revolted by his indelicate alluſion to his ſituation, her indignation did not attain its higheſt pitch, till his infamous views upon her ſeemed too clear to admit of doubt: the manner, too, in which he had hinted at her prejudices, and his aſſurance that he relied on her prudence and ſecrecy, ſhewed that he preſumed ſhe might eaſily be won.

The whole of this converſation appeared to her like a frightful dream; and, when Mrs. Prouting joined her, ſhe ſeemed in ſuch a torpid ſtate that the former concluded ſhe was ill. Emma, who really felt diſordered, did not, in anſwer to her inquiry, deny it, and would moſt gladly have gone home; but her companion aſſuring her that ſhe would be very well, after drinking a glaſs of water, and ſtanding a few minutes by an open window, ſhe paſſively did as ſhe was deſired. It alſo occurred to her, that ſtrong as the proofs ſeemed, that the odious Turk

was

was the Marquis, yet it was poſſible that ſhe might have been miſtaken; and, perhaps, ſome chance in the courſe of the evening might develope the truth; ſhe, therefore, tried to rally her ſpirits.

Chowles's figure, habited after Holbein's portrait of Henry the Eighth, which ſhe now obſerved for the firſt time, produced a momentary ſmile; but, as he attempted to draw her into converſation, ſhe broke from him.

"Now, how cruel you are," cried he; "here have I been at a monſtrous expence and trouble to get this rich dreſs, to appear to the greateſt advantage in your eyes, and had the Lord knows what plague beſides to get a ticket, on purpoſe to wait upon you; never could get here till this minute; and now, after all, you won't ſpeak to me!"

"Your

" Your dreſs, Sir, is very handſome," ſaid Emma, " and ſuits you admirably."

" Aye, ſo I thought: you gladden my heart by approving of it; but why do you ſpeak in ſuch a faint voice? Ha! what's the matter with my pretty . . . ."

" You are, I ſee," ſaid ſhe, " incorrigible; ſo I ſhall leave you."

Emma, then, under pretence of wiſhing to ſee the company in the rooms above, hurried Mrs. Prouting up the ſtair-caſe, who required no ſolicitation to aſſiſt her in eſcaping from her couſin; for ſhe had long ſeen, with much ill will, his increaſing paſſion for Emma, as ſhe dreaded nothing ſo much as his marrying. Amid a very brilliant circle, Lady Wilmington and her daughters, by their air, were ſoon recogniſed by Emma.—Several beaux attended them; but no other

other Ladies appeared to belong to this party. Lady Wilmington, who happened to be in high good humour, and who heard every body, especially the men, admiring Emma, now chose to be very civil to her, and to lament that she could not have the pleasure of being of use to her.

Lady Bell (dressed as a flower girl), after abusing her, good humouredly, for having taken no pains to disguise herself, said:—"In the next room there is a most comical old Conjuror, and he tells every body their fortunes: you can't think what odd things he says."

At that instant the Conjuror, with a long white beard, appeared at the door, all the company crowding about him; but he waved his wand with great solemnity, and they suffered him to pass.

"Do,

" Do, do let us go to him," cried [rs. Prouting, eagerly, and hear what he ill ſay to us."

Emma, almoſt indifferent to every ing, followed her mechanically.

" Pray, good Mr. Conjuror," ſaid the rmer, " tell me my fortune."

" Moſt willingly, Lady!—ſhew me ur hand. Then, after a ſlight examiıtion, the Conjuror ſaid—" The miſrtune you apprehend . . . ."

" What misfortune?" exclaimed Mrs. outing.

" Nay, if you interrupt me, I ſay no re."

" Well; I'll be ſilent: go on!"

" *What*

" *What* you apprehend, Lady, n
not happen; but your influence will
inſufficient to prevent ſome other
one's ſucceſs; and you will do well
teach yourſelf how to be ſatisfied, h
after, with your own humble dome
comforts."

" Humble domeſtic comforts, trul
cried Mrs. Prouting.

" What ſtuff the man talks! W
can he mean?"

But the Conjuror, not heeding
ſaid, very reſpectfully,---" May I prefu
fair maid, to requeſt a ſight of y
hand?"

Emma gave it; and he drew h
little aſide: then, in a voice ſo low
ſhe alone could hear him, he ſaid, l
ing at her hand, and ſhaking his hea
" Ha! this is a very intricate buſi
inde

indeed! I muſt have recourſe to my glaſs:"—and he produced a ſmall mirror, on which he fixed his eyes attentively.

"You are encompaſſed, I perceive, with lovers," ſaid he:—"In the front appear ſhew and glitter, to cover diſguſting vulgarity:—next, but not yet clearly confeſſed, appear beauty, wealth, and titles; faſhion and elegance gloſſing over looſe principles. In the back ground, ſkulking from view, ſtands a beaſt of prey, watching to devour innocence; and, equally at a diſtance, veiled in myſtery, but with no ſiniſter motives, I perceive a kneeling figure, like that of an humble deſponding lover, who wiſhes, but dares not offer, his vows of honour, truth, and love."

Emma, who liſtened with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, and could not imagine how this ſtranger became ſo well acquainted with her concerns (for ſhe clearly comprehended

prehended ſome, though not all the perſons to whom he alluded), could not reſiſt ſaying, however ſenſible ſhe was of the extreme abſurdity of putting a queſtion to him, that implied her having ſome faith in his divination—"Since you pretend to know ſo much, and much more concerning me than I know myſelf, tell me, then, what will be my fate?"

"A cloud conceals it," replied the Conjuror, "even from my penetrating eyes.——What I ſhall ſay, therefore, is only my poor opinion; which is, that, good and amiable as you are, you are deſtined to be happy, if, in the moſt important event of your life, you do not ſuffer yourſelf to be too much guided by advantages more ſhewy than ſolid."

With this unſatisfactory anſwer Emma retired, ſtill wondering at the Conjuror's ſingular language. In his fanciful ſketch of her lovers, ſhe was convinced he meant

to

to delineate the Marquis and Chowles; but ſhe could not ſo eaſily make out thoſe in the back ground. One of them had, indeed, ſome traits of reſemblance with Sydney; yet, as he always ſeemed anxious even to conceal his love from herſelf, how was this ſtranger to know it? But, might it not be Sydney himſelf, who performed the part of the Conjuror? about whom many were buſying themſelves with different conjectures, though not one ſeemed to know who he was!--- Yet Emma ſaw not the ſlighteſt probability, on reflection, that Sydney was the perſon; for, beſides her knowing that he had left town, the Conjuror was a much taller and larger man.

From theſe perplexing thoughts her attention was, for a moment, diverted by the pert gaiety of Lady Bell, the flower girl, who inſiſted upon the Conjuror's telling her fortune; to which he ſeemed averſe, declaring, at the ſame time, that

ſhe

ſhe was certain the old wretch c
know nothing about her.

" Why then, Lady," ſaid he, '
you aſk to hear it?"

" O! merely to hear what nonſ
you'll invent."

" Have a care what you ſay,"
the Conjuror, holding up his fore fin
" I may tell you *more* than you may
to hear."

" I defy you:—come now,—begin

" I will whiſper it, then, in your e

" No, no:—ſpeak out."

" Since, then, you command it,"
he, in a ſolemn manner, " I bid you
ware of long journies, knapſacks . . .

" S

"Stop, ſtop; I will hear no more," interrupted ſhe, ſeeing her mother and ſiſter drawing near; and then, turning to Emma,—"I do believe," whiſpered ſhe, "it is old Nick himſelf! Who could have thought he would ſay ſuch odd things!"

Emma by no means was ſurpriſed at what the Conjuror had ſaid to Lady Bell, becauſe any body might obſerve, that Darnford was always hovering near her, when ſhe was not immediately under her mother's eye.

An exclamation that now eſcaped from Lady Bell, excited Emma's curioſity:—"Who do you ſay looks ſo very handſome?" aſked ſhe.

"Why Miramont, who has this age been ſtanding looking at us,"

Emma raiſed her eyes, in deſpite of her recent reſolves, and ſhe ſaw Lord Miramont, without his maſk, in a beautiful Spaniſh dreſs; his hat adorned with white plumes, and a diamond button and loop; never had ſhe ſeen him look ſo handſome: ſhe turned, however, from him inſtantly, though not without a deep ſigh, regretting that beauty and depravity ſhould be thus united in him. Lady Fredville was leaning upon his arm.

Curious, however, to know how long he had perſonated a Spaniard, Emma enquired of Lady Bell, who told her ſhe was ignorant; but that, great part of the evening, he had tormented her to dance in a blue domino. Emma remembered, likewiſe, to have been addreſſed by a blue domino, who preſſed her extremely to dance with him; and a faint hope glided into her heart, that he had never appeared as a Turk. She wiſhed to aſk more queſtions

queſtions about him, but apprehenſions of Lady Bell's raillery withheld her.

A great buſtle, juſt then, round the Conjuror, again attracted Mrs. Prouting, and her paſſive companion, towards him: he was preparing to tell Chowles his fortune.

"Well, what do you ſee? Make haſte," cried the latter, laughing:—"'It muſt be funny enough, I warrant," ſaid he, addreſſing the ſpectators, "to ſee how he'll be puzzled.—Be quick, I ſay, Old wiſdom."

"I muſt have leiſure," ſaid the Conjuror, "to make obſervations in my mirror.—Ha! I ſee a very ſtately edifice, indeed; but—ſurely the foundation is rotten!—Ah! I thought ſo!—there, it trembles, it totters, it will fall to the ground!"

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"Curſe the fellow, what does he mean?" cried Chowles, ſtaring wildly round, and totally forgetting the feigned character of the Conjuror:—"My fine houſe, but juſt built, at Clapham, tumbling already to the ground! The Lord have mercy upon me! I am all over in a tremour!"—"Shall I proceed?" ſaid the Conjuror.

"O, pray do!—I am mighty curious to have the reſt; but no more about the houſe, or I'll pluck your beard off."

"Well, let us ſee:—coſtly furniture, loads of plate, hoards of jewels and money...."

"D—n the fellow!—why, now, he certainly means to have me murdered!—and is making out an inventory of my effects, on purpoſe to get me robbed!—But let's hear the end."

"I have

"I have paſſed over the beginning," cried the Conjuror; "for there I only ſaw ſhabby clothes, a pen ſtuck behind the ear, ..."

"'Tis falſe; it is a d----d lie," roared Chowles; but the Conjuror, not heeding the interruption, continued:---"empty pockets, filled at laſt; but how?---The objects in my glaſs are now confuſed; yet I faintly diſtinguiſh ſchemes and projects, amorous and commercial...."

Here Chowles, with his eyes more expanded than uſual, and grinning, nodded approbation:---"Well, well; go on."---"Artful aſſociations, airy bubbles, empty caſks, foundered....."

"Hold your deviliſh tongue," cried Chowles, foaming with rage:---"a pretty kettle of fiſh, indeed, you have made of my fortune!---Such a farrago of nonſenſe, jumbled together for no purpoſe but to

drive me mad!---I could find in my heart to drub you well, I promiſe you."

But, probably, he did not find himſelf ſo valiant; for he walked off, muttering, "What a fool I was to liſten to this abuſive raſcal!"---and the Conjuror, perceiving he had excited infinite curioſity in the ſurrounding crowd, as well as laughter, thought it prudent to retreat: and, ſlipping out of the room, he was ſeen no more.

Mrs. Prouting would willingly have remained, to the laſt minute, at the maſquerade; but Emma was ſo fatigued, both in body and mind, that, at length, the former conſented to go home.---Whilſt they were waiting for their carriage, they ſaw Henry in earneſt converſation with a very pretty Nun; who, Emma learned, was Miſs Silbourne, a great heireſs: of courſe he was not diſpoſed to quit her; and Emma, and her party,

rty, went away without him. As ſoon ſhe got home, ſhe haſtened to bed; it her thoughts were too much buſied ith the events of the evening, to ſuffer er to ſleep till a very late hour in the ay.

CHAP. V.

ABOUT four o'clock, Mrs. Mourt who had envied her daughter's ha neſs all the preceding evening, wen her chamber, as ſhe heard ſhe was ring, not a little impatient to learn e particular of the maſquerade; but Em faint and dejected, had not ſpirits ſatisfy her curioſity: however, after ner, finding her mother much diſſati at hearing nothing, when ſhe had pected to hear ſo much, ſhe attem to deſcribe ſome of the dreſſes and acters ſhe had obſerved, but her acc was ſo lame and imperfect, that Mourtray loſt all patience.

"Bleſs my heart!" cried ſhe, your age, I ſhould have gathered e matter at ſuch a maſquerade to f

ıtion for a twelvemonth! What,
ody ſpeak to, or notice you? And
hear nothing?"

ı!" thought Emma, "I heard too

pacify her mother, ſhe then told
y of the Conjuror; relating, with
idelity, all that ſhe had heard him
thers, but paſſing over very ſlightly
e had ſaid to herſelf.

Mourtray was very well diverted,
heard the adventure of her friend
es, which ſhocked and offended
much, that, occupied with that,
puzzling her brains to gueſs who
prudent Conjuror could be, ſhe
to enquire more minutely into
ad befallen her daughter, who had
lination to relate the mortifying
le that paſſed between her and
rk.

In vain ſhe tried to forget this odi
man; his figure ſwam conſtantly be
her eyes.—One moment ſhe perſua
herſelf that it was impoſſible Lord M
mont ſhould thus have inſulted her;
as he had been ſeen firſt as a Dom
and then as a Spaniard, there ſcar
ſeemed time, ſhe thought, for him to
the Turk. She could not recollect v
ther ſhe had ſeen the blue domino du
her converſation with the former; c
ſhe have done that, it would indiſputa
have proved, that Lord Miramont
not been the Turk:—yet, having di
vered the rank of the latter, by the i
vertency of her own expreſſion, wh
he had not attempted to diſown,
could fix on no other man, with wh
ſhe had any acquaintance, that this ſui
excepting Lord Miramont.

If ſhe could have ſuppoſed it poſſ
that Lord Wilmington would go t
maſquerade, ſhe might have ſuſpe

him, in conſequence of his odd looks, and flouriſhing ſpeeches; but there was no inſtance in her recollection, of his ever appearing at any public place; his habits of life, therefore, rendered it highly improbable; and likewiſe, that, wary as he was ſuppoſed to be, he ſhould thus commit himſelf.

The Conjuror, too, was as myſterious a perſon as the Turk; unintelligible as part of his jargon had been, there was enough of it clear, to convince her, he was perfectly well acquainted with the private hiſtory of almoſt all thoſe whoſe fortunes he told: how he came by this knowledge appeared to her incomprehenſible—yet, as her conjectures could not develope theſe myſteries, ſhe ſought to compoſe her mind, and truſted that time would elucidate the whole.

Two days after the maſquerade, Chowles invited himſelf to dine with the

trays; and after relating, with great resentment, the pretended Conjuror's behaviour, he swore he should not mind giving a thousand pounds to know who he was; for the rascal, added he, did his best to injure me in the most tender point,—in my credit."

"Your credit!" said Mourtray, gravely; "surely *that* rests on too firm a basis to be injured by the idle words dropped at a masquerade!"

"O, certainly, certainly," cried Chowles; "and the fellow, probably, did not even know my name; yet he provoked me sadly."

Mourtray now retired to his study, and Mrs. Mourtray said, the Conjuror ought to have been kicked out of the room:—"But is it possible," continued she, "that you should not, by his voice, or some

ſome other circumſtance, give a gueſs at the perſon?"

"I have not the moſt diſtant idea," anſwered Chowles; "the fellow was too well diſguiſed; and you will laugh, I am ſure, for I can't help laughing myſelf at my folly; but I declare his nonſenſe ran ſo in my head, that I could not reſt till I had been to Clapham; ſo, yeſterday, though tired as a dog, down I went, found all right,—the walls as firm as a rock."

"So you did not underſtand," enquired Emma, "that he only ſpoke figuratively?"

"O, hang his figures; how the devil ſhould he know any thing of them? But, I warrant, I am his match there, and will figure with him, in any way, as long as he pleaſes. But, pray, Miſs Mourtray,

tray, tell us a bit what he ſaid to you?"

"Why, he pretended to ſee, in his magical glaſs, ſeveral very unpleaſant objects, that he bade me beware of."

"Umph! He ſeemed mighty fond of the diſmals. But ſurely he talked to you of ſweet-hearts, and ſuch like. What ſort of a huſband did he promiſe you? —ha!"

"I have not promiſed to repeat all he ſaid; neither would it entertain *you*, or my mother, to hear it."

The topic of converſation was then changed.

The next day was *that* appointed for a great aſſembly at Lady Wilmington's; which, ſhe ſaid, ſhould only contain the cream of the fine world: but, as Emma would

would be ornamental, ſhe gave her, at the maſquerade, a card for herſelf and family; truſting that Mrs. Mourtray's confinement would prevent her from profiting by this pretended civility.

But Mrs. Mourtray, who had of late mended faſt, thought herſelf quite well enough to venture in a crowd, which ſhe loved beyond meaſure; and her huſband excuſing himſelf being of the party, the Ladies and Henry, about ten o'clock, repaired to Lady Wilmington's.

Emma knew not whether ſhe ought to ſeek, or to avoid, an opportunity of obtaining an *eclairciſſement* relative to the Turk, of which ſhe thought ſhe had a chance at this aſſembly; but, at all events, ſhe determined to be extremely circumſpect in her behaviour.

As it was yet early when ſhe and her party arrived, they traverſed a long ſuite of

of fine apartments, very thinly filled; formal ſtatelineſs ſeemed to prevail; and Emma, already dejected, followed her mother confuſed and abaſhed, ſenſible that numbers of eyes were rudely fixed upon her. In the laſt of theſe rooms Lady Wilmington ſat oppoſite the door to receive her company; ſhe ſeemed rather ſurpriſed to ſee Mrs. Mourtray, whom, with petrifying civility, ſhe made a few ſpeeches on her recovery; and then recommended to her to make her own party, though ſhe well knew this was almoſt an impracticable taſk, where ſhe had ſcarcely an acquaintance. Emma ſhe treated with cordiality, and chatted a few minutes good humoured with her and Henry; whilſt poor Mrs. Mourtray ſank down in a ſeat behind the door, very angry with herſelf for having left her own home.

Nothing could be more dull than the collection of *cream*, though conſiſting

perſo

ns of the highest rank and fortune, and
e most brilliant appearance; for the
s seemed to have made a point to
themselves in all their finery for this
ion, and the eye was dazzled with
and jewels.

gether, with fine clothes, people
ed to have put on a different air and
er, than what naturally belonged to
. Some affected a condescending
; others a discreet whisper; and all
ed struggling ineffectually against
partly occasioned by a scarcity of
g men. A few, in hopes of relief,
eagerly seized on the vacant card
s; and the gloomy silence was broken
ionally by the sound of *odd trick—
y honours—great and little cassino.*

nma, too timid to venture back
igh these formidable apartments,
d herself near her mother; who,
ary to custom, was not disposed to
speak.

ſpeak. At length Lady Bell appeared, and, commiſerating Mrs. Mourtray's rueful countenance, ſhe made her a party at cribbage; and then, taking Emma under the arm, led her to the anti-room, which, by this time, was much crowded, and formality hence had taken its flight. Some of the ſame perſons who had been ſitting ſcrewed up in the great apartments, looking prim and demure, were here laughing and talking as loud as they could.

Lord Wilmington, whom Emma had ſeen before deeply engaged in diſcuſſing politics, now approached her with his uſual civility; and, after a few compliments, inquired how ſhe had been entertained at the late maſquerade. She anſwered, very coldly, "Not at all."

"You quite amaze me!" cried he; "a pretty young Lady, like you, not to find entertainment in a place, where you muſt

ave been admired as one of its
rnaments!"

ery, and the Turk, were ſo con-
together in Emma's brain, that ſhe
ſtily, with her eyes fixed on Lord
igton—" What character, pray,
r Lordſhip aſſume?"

e! Miſs Mourtray, me! at a maſ-
! You cannot ſeriouſly aſk me
ſtion."

ery ſeriouſly, Lord Wilmington;
ou, or were you not, there?"

hat could have induced me to go
overwhelmed as I am with buſi-
No, Miſs Mourtray, my family can
for me, that I was ſhut up in my
the whole evening."

es," ſaid Lady Elizabeth, who
ear her father, " Papa was too
buſy

buſy even to ſee us before we
hence."

"That's no proof," obſerved
Bell, archly, "that he did not ſtily,
our departure, take a peep of the
querade."

Lord Wilmington frowned; but,
ing to Emma, with a forced ſmi
ſaid—"You muſt have had ſome
for your queſtion, Miſs Mourtray;
that you ſaw ſome body there, who
thought like me?"

"For your Lordſhip's ſake, it is
hoped, I did not; becauſe the onl
ſon that there was a poſſibility of ſi
ing to be you, was a moſt odious
—And, to avoid further explanatio
haſtened to mix in the crowd; ſtil
ſtate of incertitude, though by no
inclined to place much reliance
Lordſhip's veracity.

Emma, who obſerved that her brother, here, was as much engroſſed by Miſs Silbourne as he had been at the maſquerade, was now by him introduced to her: ſhe thought her prettier than ever, and that ſhe appeared extremely gentle and amiable, but very ſhy. This did not, however, diſcourage Henry from attaching himſelf to her; and ſhe did not ſeem diſpleaſed with his attentions, though ſhe always kept cloſe to her aunt, Lady Bingfield, who was a moſt reſpectable old woman.

Mrs. Mourtray, having played as long as ſhe liked, and finding little to amuſe her at the aſſembly, was thinking of departing, when her ſon preſſed her to prolong her ſtay for a few minutes; and Emma, while they were converſing together, ſaw Lord Miramont enter the room: ſhe turned pale at his approach, dreading, leſt a word ſhould fall from his lips, that ſhould compel her to believe he had been the Turk.

With

With his uſual gay unconcern, h
coſted her, deſiring her to acknowl
how admirably he was diſguiſed whe
they met; obſerving, ſhe did not fee
know him in the leaſt.

"You did then ſpeak to me, l
Miramont," ſaid ſhe, in a faulte
voice; and, with a ſerious air, "
how were you dreſſed at that time?"

"In a blue domino, with a very fi
lar maſk; but you were cruel, and ref
to dance with me; afterwards, wh
was in a Spaniſh dreſs, and unmaſk
could never catch your eye."

Emma remembered theſe circ
ſtances; yet ſhe heſitated whether
ſhould venture to aſk him further q
tions, ſtill apprehenſive of what ſhe m
hear.

"I

" How grave and thoughtful you are night, Miſs Mourtray," ſaid Lord Mimont; " and the other night you ſufred an odious dog of a Turk to have ſo ng a converſation with you, that nobor elſe was honoured with your noe."

" Umph!" thought Emma, " is he ouſing the Turk now by way of a blind; penting, perhaps, that he betrayed his inciples prematurely."—Then caſting a netrating glance on Lord Miramont's ce, ſhe ſaid—" If I could have foreen what I ſhould hear from that preended Turk, I would not for worlds ave liſtened to him a ſingle inſtant. I ope, however, he miſtook me for ſomeody elſe."

" That is not probable, for you were ot in the leaſt diſguiſed: but, pray (if y queſtion be not indiſcreet), did you er diſcover who this Turk was that

thus

thus incurred your reſentment? A horrid wretch he muſt have been, I am ſure!"

"I never did diſcover him."

"I wonder," ſaid Lord Miramont, archly, "who the happy fellow was, whom you meant to indulge with your converſation, when you miſtook the Turk for him."

"It is of little conſequence," replied Emma, bluſhing; "but pray, Lord Miramont, never mention the Turk again to me; I wiſh to drive his odious figure from my thoughts."

"I never will name him again," ſaid he; "and though I diſliked him at the maſquerade, I now hate him a thouſand times more; yet I own my curioſity is on the rack about him."

Lord

Lord Miramont's countenance looked ſo open as he ſpoke, and all his words ſeemed ſo frank and natural, that Emma, who frequently had reproached herſelf for ſuppoſing he could be capable of inſulting her, was now almoſt perſuaded that ſhe had wronged him; but, though this cheered her ſpirits, ſhe ſtill thought ſhe ought to be upon her guard till the matter was entirely cleared up; and feeling, therefore, that ſhe could not converſe with him with her former eaſe and gaiety, ſhe behaved to him with great reſerve.

This he ſeemed to remark with a degree of pain and ſurprize, that ſecretly delighted her; but not to hear his complaints, and diſtruſting her own ſteadineſs, ſhe haſtened to get out of his way.

Reflecting, after ſhe left the aſſembly, on all that had paſſed, ſhe thought,—though ſhe might venture to acquit Lord Miramont,—his uncle did not ſtand ſo

clear of ſuſpicion; yet it was poſſible that both might be equally innocent, and that ſome perſon, who knew her by ſight, though a ſtranger to herſelf, might have diverted himſelf at her expenſe, merely to embarraſs and perplex her.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

THE morning after Lady Wilmington's aſſembly, Henry, being alone with his ſiſter, haſtened to aſk her opinion of Miſs Silbourne; and, if ſhe did not think her quité an angel.

"As for that," replied Emma, "I cannot ſay, not having the advantage of any acquaintance amongſt the claſs of angels; but I certainly think her a very charming girl, and that you would be extremely happy, if you could get her for a wife."

"Oh! I ſhould be the moſt bleſſed of mortals!---She has not only beauty enough to turn a man's head, but ſhe is the gentleſt, ſweeteſt little creature I ever

ſaw; and, beſides, ſhe will have a very large fortune."

"Perhaps, then, if ſhe were leſs handſome and amiable, you would find full as many charms in her."

"O! upon my ſoul, you miſtake: if ſhe had not ſix-pence, I ſhould prefer her to every girl on earth; but I will not pretend to ſay that I do not rejoice that ſhe has both beauty and riches."

"If, then," ſaid Emma, "you are ſo much in love, it is to be hoped you will try to become worthy of her; and, as the firſt ſtep, lead a more regular life than you have done ſince you entered the army."

"Regular!—why, my little preacher, am I not as regular as clock-work already?"

"You

" You perfectly underſtand me, Henry! However, let me aſk, if your going out laſt night, or rather this morning, after we returned from Groſvenor Square, is a proof of your regularity?"

" Certainly; for it is what I do every night: I never begin to feel my exiſtence till all you ſober people are faſt aſleep; and a few of the little hours then, are worth all thoſe that precede them."

Emma ſhook her head:—" Depend upon it," ſaid ſhe, " this is not the way to gain Miſs Silbourne."

" She knows nothing about the matter," ſaid he; " and I hope you will not be ſo officious to inform her of it; for, though ſhe is a ſweet creature, her notions are cruelly preciſe, owing to the ridiculous ſtyle of her education. Her father is a good old man, but quite formal, and of *la vieille cour;* ſo is her aunt,

Lady Bingfield: yet I think I ſhall be able to manage her pretty well; and, if once I can eſtabliſh myſelf firmly in my angel's heart, I ſhall ſet both the old ones at defiance."

"How did you become acquainted with this family, whoſe manners and habits form ſuch a contraſt to your's?"

"By the mereſt accident in the world: owing to a ſilly incident at the play, not worth mentioning, but which frightened the old Lady; and I, who had been in an ecſtaſy of admiration, viewing her niece the whole night, fortunately was of ſome uſe to her. A few days afterwards we met at the Maſquerade: we renewed our acquaintance; I was preſented to the father; and now you know all; for I have not yet (I know not what the devil ails me) had courage to ſpeak out to Miſs Silbourne."

The entrance of the Ladies Fontelieu put an end to this converſation. A viſit to Emma from Lady Elizabeth was a very rare event; and ſhe wondered what could occaſion it; for ſhe did not entirely credit the civil ſpeeches ſhe made, of ſorrow and regret, that ſhe had been ſo long prevented having the pleaſure of waiting upon her. Her affability extended alſo to Henry; who, having nothing to do, juſt then, that he liked better, very readily engaged in converſation with her.

The truth was, Lady Elizabeth, who, though handſome, had been hitherto peculiarly unfortunate in ſuiting the taſte of the men, and who began to apprehend ſhe muſt lower her pretenſions, was ſuddenly become very condeſcending to all handſome youths; and having, the preceding night, had an opportunity of examining, attentively, Henry's perſon, it had met with her approbation; and as

ſhe knew he reſided with his parents, though not how ſeldom he was at home, ſhe willingly accompanied her ſiſter and Madame Duplin, in hopes that ſhe might gain another view of him.

While ſhe and Henry were chatting together, Lady Bell, after a little deſultory converſation with Emma, ſaid ſhe had a meſſage to her from her father; and, perceiving her amazement, ſhe added, "It is about the emigrants. It ſeems, papa has lately heard many moving circumſtances of their ſituation, which were before unknown to him, and he meditates doing ſomething effectual for their relief; and, as he knew how kindly you intereſted yourſelf about them, he bade me tell you what he was ſure would give you pleaſure, at the ſame time requeſting you will ſend him their direction."

Emma returned her compliments and thanks to his Lordſhip, writing on a card the

the name of the ſtreet, and No, where the emigrants lodged. But her gratitude was not very warm; for ſhe thought Lord Wilmington had, too late, recollected the diſtreſs of theſe French connections of the houſe of Fontelieu; and that his meditations concerning them might, at laſt, end in his doing nothing at all; having, during the winter, ſeen many inſtances of his deceiving people with falſe promiſes.

It ſtruck her, too, as ſo ſingular that he ſhould ſend her this meſſage: never, in his life, having named the ſubject before, that ſhe again ſuſpected he was conſcious of having committed himſelf imprudently at the Maſquerade; and thus, by feigned benevolence, hoped to ſecure her ſilence.

She reſolved, therefore, to ſay nothing of Lord Wilmington's ſudden kindneſs to the Ducheſs, whom ſhe called upon,

as often as ſhe could obtain her mo
permiſſion; and the more ſhe ſaw
and the amiable *Sidonie*, the
warmly ſhe became attached to
both.

As ſoon as the Ladies Fontelieu
departed, Emma revolved, in her
her converſation with her brother,
mode of life had often given her
uneaſineſs. His family ſaw little of
he roſe very late, ſeldom dined at
and, ſhe ſuſpected, often ſtaid ou
whole night; or, at leaſt, did not
till it was very far advanced. She
that her mother, indulgent to
even to weakneſs, kept her fath
ignorance of many of theſe *ecarts*
that he ſaw enough to diſpleaſe an
him; though, from the mildneſs
temper, he forbore laying much re
on him.

Emma, however, hoped that a paſſion for a virtuous woman would reclaim her brother.

Mr. Silbourne had, for ſome time, lamented his daughter's ſhyneſs, attributing it, in ſome meaſure, to the very retired education that, he now regretted, he had given her: he was, therefore, very ſolicitous to have her mix in the world; where, he hoped, ſhe would acquire a certain degree of modeſt eaſe, as far removed from boldneſs as from that exceſſive timidity, very diſtreſſing to herſelf, and even to him.

His ſiſter, Lady Bingfield, adviſed him to give a little dance, and to inſiſt upon his daughter Selina's doing the honours of his houſe: this was a taſk ſhe would willingly have declined; but, as ſhe liked the idea of the dance, ſhe ſubmitted to the condition preſcribed. Amongſt thoſe invited on this occaſion were the Mour-

trays; and Emma flattered herſelf to derive from it no ſmall pleaſure. She knew that Lady Bingfield, who had the charge of inviting the company, had a very general acquaintance, and certainly would not fail of placing ſo fine and faſhionable a man as Lord Miramont foremoſt in her liſt of dancing men; and, as ſhe had now fully perſuaded herſelf, ſhe had no cauſe to be offended with him, ſhe felt doubly anxious to ſee him; having (as ſhe imagined) remarked more concern in his countenance, when ſhe had judged it right to behave to him with unuſual reſerve, than was conſiſtent with indifference.

Beſides, ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould diſcover whether he had ſent her any tickets for the Maſquerade. The odious Turk had acknowledged having ſent two; but who had ſent the others, ſhe was yet ignorant; and though ſhe would, upon no account, enquire of Lord Miramont concerning them,

as the queſtion would imply, that
d the vanity to ſuppoſe he had
ed himſelf about her; yet it was
: he himſelf might mention the
ſtance, as well as the day, which
entirely clear the matter, as the
ıentioned that his tickets had been
: evening before the Maſquerade.
her infinite mortification and diſ-
tment, Lord Miramont did not
at this dance, though ſhe diſ-
d that he had been invited; and,
ent no excuſe, he was expected to
: moment.

hing, however, could be more
ɔn with him than to forget invita-
and to neglect ſending excuſes.—
ıs equally remiſs as to paying, or
ırning viſits; ſo that he was gene-
ı diſgrace with ſome one, whom he
ſended; and often he was the only
who had no idea of it.

This

This negligence, and total diſregard of *etiquette*, amounting often to rudeneſs, drew upon him the imputation of pride and haughtineſs; of which, nevertheleſs, he was entirely free. But even thoſe who were angry with him, when he came in their way, found it impoſſible to retain their diſpleaſure; for there was ſomething ſo noble in his air, and captivating in his countenance; ſo eaſy and agreeable in his manners; that often, without ſpeaking, he could, by a ſmile, or a nod, conciliate approbation.

But Lady Bingfield, whoſe ideas of politeneſs were ſtrained to the higheſt pitch, and who inceſſantly exhauſted her breath in declamations againſt the ill-breeding of modern young men, felt now ſo provoked at Lord Miramont's diſappointing her, that, after citing him as the ringleader of all offenders, in this way, ſhe vowed he ſhould never,

on

on any occaſion, be noticed by her again.

" Hear what the old cat ſays," whiſpered Lady Bell to Emma:—" poor Miramont!—how wretched he will be when ſhe *cuts* him!"

" Huſh! dear Lady Bell," ſaid Emma; her eyes are fixed upon you, and ſhe will hear you."

" I don't care if ſhe does. Did any body ever ſee ſuch a ſet of *quizzes* as ſhe has collected together? Not a knowing man in the room!—and, as to the women,—look at their horrid figures!—not one of them did I ever ſee, but at ſome poking old dowager's rout!"

" Nay," ſaid Emma; " I ſee ſome very pretty, well-dreſſed women; and many of them are of high rank."

" Rank,

"Rank, ay; but what's that without faſhion?—a mere ſound; nothing at all! Who cares for an ugly vulgar Ducheſs, or my Lady *this*, or my Lady *that*, if they do not belong to a certain ſet?"

"You will allow, however, that Miſs Silbourne is beautiful, and perfectly well dreſſed?"

"A poor tame thing!—rather pretty, to be ſure; but looks like a frighted hare; and has neither air nor manner."

"I wonder why you came here, Lady Bell; for probably you knew, by your acquaintance with Lady Bingfield, what you had to expect."

"Ah! thereby hangs a tale!—I had laid a ſcheme to get Darnford here, and your brother promiſed me he would bring him; but no ſooner did that old witch, Lady Bingfield, ſee his name on a

liſt

f dancing men, which Henry Mour-
wrote by her deſire, than, moſt ſpite-
ſhe ſcratched out poor Darn-
s."

For what reaſon?"

Becauſe, when ſhe gave a ball, laſt
he refuſed to dance with ſome fright-
ſis ſhe had picked out for him;
his was the reaſon ſhe aſſigned!—
ould your brother ſoften her flinty
."

ma thought it very probable, that,
r excluſion of Captain Darnford,
Bingfield had been actuated by
motives; for this man's character,
gambler, every day became more
ious; and ſhe had reaſon to believe,
e had not a little contributed in
pting Henry, a conſiderable degree
timacy ſubſiſting between them.—
evening, however, Henry had no
leiſure

leiſure to miſs ſuch an aſſociate, for he was entirely abſorbed in his admiration of Miſs Silbourne: he not only danced the two firſt dances with her, but afterwards contrived to ſit by her, whenever ſhe was not dancing; and Emma fancied ſhe diſtinguiſhed him more favourably than any of the men who flocked about her; for a young heireſs, rich and handſome, could not fail of having a numerous train.

Mr. Silbourne, who never loſt ſight of her, did not appear deſirous of controuling her actions; nor to diſapprove of Henry's attentions: he even ſeemed particularly diſpoſed to ſhew civilities to his relations; and, though he had no acquaintance with Mrs. Mourtray prior to this night, he entered cordially into converſation with her, and requeſted that his daughter might be allowed to cultivate an intimacy with her's, to which ſhe gladly aſſented.

This

This ball had ſeemed to Emma of ternal duration, though ſhe had been xtremely admired; but ſhe had danced with none but people quite indifferent to ıer; and her mind had been the whole ıight in a ſtate of expectation, which ıad ended in diſappointment.

Lady Bell, as ſhe left the room, gave her a hint, that ſhe ſhould call upon her ſhortly; and, the next morning, ſhe arrived in Wimpole Street.

"I did not expect to ſee you again ſo very ſoon," ſaid ſhe; "but Mamma has lent me her carriage to go a ſhopping, ſo I wiſh you would take a jumble with me.—Madame du Plomb is waiting for me below, ſo let us be off."

After what Mrs. Mourtray had ſeen of this very volatile young Lady's behaviour, in Kenſington Gardens, ſhe did not much like her daughter ſhould engage in

in any party with her; nor did Emma like it herſelf; but Lady Bell was ſo urgent, that ſhe obtained her wiſh; and as the Governeſs was with her, and that they were only to ſtop at a few ſhops, Mrs. Mourtray hoped it would not be poſſible for her to lead Emma into any ſcrape.

No ſooner had Lady Bell and her companion quitted Mrs. Mourtray's ſight, than the former ſaid, "I do aſſure you, Mamma is become ſo watchful and ſuſpicious, and Papa ſo croſs, that I lead a miſerable life."

"Ah! Lady Bell," ſaid Emma; "can you deny that ſhe has not ſome reaſon to be ſo? Perhaps both Lord and Lady Wilmington have a ſuſpicion of (allow me to ſay) your ill-placed partiality."

"Stop a little," cried Lady Bell; "only reſerve your ſermon till we get into

e carriage; and then, in return for
vill play the part of Joſeph, and
:et your dreams."

na, vexed and confuſed, ſhook her
and was going to ſay ſomething;
ıdy Bell hurried her into the coach;
ere ſhe laughed and rattled away,
›niſhing ſpirits, without any inter-
n from her companions.

:y drove into the city; and after
Bell had made her purchaſes of a
er of inſignificant things, on their
home, as they approached Somer-
ouſe, ſhe exclaimed:—"O! poſi-
, I muſt ſtop, and ſee the exhi-
:"——and ſhe pulled the check

ɔurely, Lady Bell!—Surely!" cried
a, alarmed; "you cannot think of
ı thing."

"Say

" Say not a word," replied ſhe; " ſee it I will, and this inſtant."

In vain Emma and the Governeſs repreſented the impropriety of her intention, and conjured her to wait till ſhe had an opportunity of accompanying Lady Wilmington, who would certainly diſapprove of her going thither, without her knowledge: ſhe obſtinately perſiſted in her reſolution.

" Why, I would not, for the world," cried ſhe, " omit taking you there, my dear *Madame;* for you, who are ſo great a judge of painting, ſhall decide which of our Engliſh artiſts is the moſt worthy to paint your portrait, which I have ſome thoughts of having done for my dreſſing room."

The Governeſs bowed, and ſaid ſhe did her too much honour.

Lady

Lady Bell continued:—"I have already fixed the coſtume that, I think, will beſt become you. But, pray tell me, are you acquainted with Shakeſpear?"

"*O que oui Miladi;*" and, ſhe added, that ſhe recollected that Monſieur de Voltaire had once a great *demelé* with Monſieur Shakeſpear.

"Juſt ſo," ſaid Lady Bell:—"I expected to find you well-informed on this ſubject. You remember, then, in one of Monſieur Shakeſpear's plays, a famous Matron, who is uſually attended by a man, called Peter: now, I think, your comely perſon (here the Governeſs bowed, and ſmiled) would appear to great advantage, in her dreſs and character; and, if Miſs Mourtray's ſervant, Peter, had not, of late, acquired rather too poliſhed an air, I would have borrowed him to complete the picture."

Madame

Madame Duplin, not reliſhing this aſſociation with Peter, made a wry face; and the carriages, which had hitherto ſtopped the way, having made room for Lady Wilmington's, Lady Bell, ſpringing out of it, caught hold of Emma's arm, laughing at her own nonſenſe, and hurrying up the ſtairs, to enjoy the ſight of Madame Duplin, puffing and panting, in her endeavour to keep up with her.

They had ſcarcely entered the firſt room, when Capt. Darnford joined them; but, though Lady Bell pretended to be ſurprized to ſee him, Emma had no doubt that it was a concerted ſcheme, and ſhe was angry with herſelf for having quitted the carriage.

Her vexation was not unobſerved by Lady Bell; but, having gained *her* point, ſhe had now no other ſolicitude than to diſtance both her and her Governeſs, in which ſhe ſucceeded; for Emma's good-

nature

nature would not ſuffer her to leave poor Madame Duplin, who kept puſhing people along to get near her charge, ejaculating, every inſtant, "*Ah! mon Dieu!*"—But her charge was not to be overtaken, and ſoon contrived to get into the thickeſt of the crowd.

The Governeſs now, with a moſt piteous look at Emma, ſaid, "*Eſt-il poſſible?*"

"You may well aſk that queſtion, indeed!" ſaid a thundering voice, in her own language, which both the Ladies knew to be Lord Wilmington's, "*Eſt-il poſſible?*" continued he, "that I ſhould find you here, and ſee my daughter thus accompanied yonder!" pointing to Lady Bell, leaning on Darnford's arm, quite of the oppoſite ſide of the room.

Madame Duplin, in the greateſt diſmay, and trembling in all her joints, attempted

to juſtify herſelf; but the Earl was already gone; and, in an inſtant, returned with his daughter, who had loſt ſomewhat of her uſual courage.

Lord Wilmington, after bowing, and ſaying a few civil things to Emma, ſaid, ſternly, to Madame Duplin, "Lady Iſabella has heard part of my ſentiments already on *her* conduct; and, aſſuredly, *Madame, your*'s ſhall be fully diſcuſſed in Groſvenor Square."

He then commanded them to go home immediately; nor did he leave them, till he ſaw them ſeated in the carriage.

"Well," ſaid Lady Bell, as ſoon as her father had left her:—"Well, to be ſure, I am in a rare ſcrape! But who could have thought that old dad, who never ſtirs till near four o'clock out of his houſe, unleſs to attend the levee, ſhould juſt fix on this morning to viſit the

the exhibition!—He has treated me with the overture of the piece, already, in a very ſharp key; and, I ſuppoſe, we ſhall have a grand *finale* at home, in which Mamma will join."

"I am not at all ſurprized at what has happened," ſaid Emma; "and if, by Captain Darnford's means, you get into no worſe ſcrape, bad as this is, you will be fortunate. Decide, for Heaven's ſake! to break off all intercourſe with this man; and never again condeſcend to employ ſuch little, ungenerous, arts and ſchemes with your friends, as thoſe by which you induced me to accompany you in this clandeſtine expedition."

"So, you are angry, too!—and *Madame*, I ſee, is crying!" ſaid Lady Bell; "however, I will take the whole blame upon myſelf; and, I flatter myſelf, that, with a few penitent looks, and promiſes

of amendment, I ſhall lay the troubled ſpirits at home.——In the mean while, let us think no more about this unlucky incident."

Emma, however, could not ſo eaſily diſmiſs it from her thoughts; and when, on her return home, ſhe related what had paſſed to her parents, they both concurred in opinion, that ſhe ſhould have no further intercourſe with ſuch an artful girl as Lady Bell, excepting in the preſence of her family, when it could not be avoided.

"You ſee, my dear girl," ſaid Mr. Mourtray, "that Lady Bell, who once appeared to you ſo amiable, and ſo ſincere in her friendſhip, is a very different perſon from what your ingenuous but romantic diſpoſition had imagined.——I truſt, therefore, in future, you will not too haſtily form attachments

s that may give you cauſe of after-
t.—And now, adieu! for I am, this
ng, going ſome miles on my road
ownton, where I have urgent bu-
."

CHAP. VII.

THE accounts Mourtray heard of the proceedings of the perſon he had employed, by Chowles's advice, in his works at Downton, haſtened a journey he had long projected; and the day after his departure, Emma received, as ſhe was ſitting down to dinner with her mother, a letter by the penny-poſt, written in French, and ſigned by her friend Sidonie, to ſay, that, in conſequence of a very unexpected piece of good fortune, her parents had been enabled to remove themſelves and family to more convenient lodgings than thoſe they had hitherto occupied; and that, being full of impatience to inform her (their firſt kind friend) of all that had happened, they earneſtly requeſted ſhe would favour them with her company at eight o'clock the evening, at No. —, —— Street, St. James's; and the

the letter concluded with many aſſurances of unaltered friendſhip.

Emma's heart dilated with pleaſure as ſhe read this letter; firmly believing that Lord Wilmington, contrary to her expectations, had really kept his word; and that, by his means, her friends were now placed in a ſituation ſuitable to their rank and merit.

Full of impatience to learn every particular of this agreeable event, ſhe beſought her mother to permit her compliance with their requeſt; to which Mrs. Mourtray the more readily acceded, as ſhe was herſelf engaged, without her daughter, to meet, at an early hour, a little quiet *caſino* party.

Emma, therefore, as ſoon as ſhe had ſet her down at the houſe where ſhe had her engagement, gave Peter the direction ſhe had received from Sidonie; and bade

him, when he knocked at the door, to enquire for the French Ladies; well knowing the impoſſibility of teaching him to pronounce their names.

The carriage ſtopped at a ſmall but tolerably decent looking houſe; a maid ſervant opened the door, Peter obeyed his orders; and, returning to his young Lady with a nod, that ſhe perfectly underſtood to be a ſign the Ladies were at home, ſhe alighted; but before ſhe gave any directions to Peter, ſhe deſired the maid would enquire, whether it would be agreeable to the Ducheſs that ſhe ſhould ſtay the whole evening.

The girl flew up ſtairs with the meſſage, and returned for anſwer, that the Ladies ſaid, the longer ſhe ſtaid the better. Upon which Emma diſmiſſed the carriage, giving orders that it ſhould fetch her at a quarter before ten. The maid now marched before her up a narrow ſtaircaſe, and

and through two ſmall rooms, which terminated in a ſpacious drawing-room, where ſhe deſired her to ſit down; adding, that the Ladies were in their chamber above, but that they would come down in a few minutes.

Emma concluded, by the appearance of theſe apartments, that the emigrants' affairs muſt be greatly changed indeed; and hardly could ſhe perſuade herſelf this change could be wrought by the parſimonious Earl. She remarked, too, with ſurprize, how little the entrance or the exterior of the houſe, correſponded with the elegance within.

While ſhe was making theſe reflections, ſhe heard the doors of the adjoining rooms opening; ſhe ruſhed forward —but, inſtead of the emigrants, to her utter amazement, ſhe met Lord Wilmington!—He, as well as herſelf, made a geſture of ſurprize:—"Ah! Miſs

Mourtray!" exclaimed he, "I little expected to find you here!"

"I am really amazed to meet your Lordſhip," cried Emma, "and will ſend to inform the Duke and Ducheſs of your arrival."

"No, no; I have ſent to them already: but, my dear Miſs Mourtray, you gave me a wrong direction; I went to ſeek for them near the Haymarket."

"They did live there, my Lord, and are only lately removed hither; perhaps you can explain the cauſe;" and ſhe watched his countenance whilſt ſhe ſpoke, but it was impenetrable; and ſhe added: —"I wonder, however, what can detain them ſo long."

"No matter; let you and I, in the meanwhile, have a little ſociable chat; for I never ſee you now, ſweet Miſs Mourtray,

Mourtray, which, upon my word, I regret moſt exceedingly; I do, indeed."

Emma bowed very coldly, diſliking her ſituation; extremely impatient to be releaſed from it, and curious to know whether he was really the beneficent author of the emigrants' good fortune.

"I obſerve, with pleaſure, Miſs Mourtray," ſaid Lord Wilmington, "that London has not in the leaſt robbed your cheeks of that lovely bloom I have ſo often admired in ——ſhire. You will find this ſofa an eaſier ſeat than that chair."

"Pray," ſaid Emma, without moving, "how is Lady Wilmington to day? I heard ſhe was not quite well yeſterday."

"O! ſhe is very well—Do you gueſs my buſineſs here, my dear Miſs Mourtray?"

"Yes; I conclude I may aſcribe to your Lordſhip ſome pleaſant circumſtances that have befallen this family.—*If* ſo, I can eaſily account for this viſit."

"Why, things are not exactly as you imagine—not abſolutely ſo. I am come, however, I give you my honour, to make them ſome very advantageous propoſitions; to which I am induced by a motive, that I ſhould be too happy if you would permit me to develope to you."

"This is by no means neceſſary, Lord Wilmington," ſaid Emma, gravely: "reſerve your communications for thoſe, who, by belonging to your family, may be thought to have ſome claim upon you."

"The claim of beauty," ſaid Lord Wilmington, in a very ſoft voice, and advancing towards her—"the claim of beauty

beauty, I do, indeed, acknowledge to be irreſiſtible; and if the Ducheſs, or this Sidonie, had one half of your charms, then, indeed, they might command me. —Yet, ſuffer me to communicate . . ."

But Emma attended not:—the whole of Lord Wilmington's converſation bore ſo ſtrong a ſimilitude with the Turk's, that her ſuſpicions now amounted almoſt to certainty; and, ſickening with diſguſt, ſhe roſe abruptly, and pulled the bell, but ſhe found the wire was broken; ſhe was going, therefore, towards the door to call the maid, firmly determined not to remain any longer with him; but the Earl prevented her, by ſtanding with his back againſt the door; and would have taken her hand, if ſhe had not ſnatched it away.

"What is the matter?" cried he: what does dear Miſs Mourtray wiſh?'

Emma,

Emma, feeling how much ſhe was in his power, ſtrove to ſay, with calmneſs —" My wiſh, Lord Wilmington, is, that the Ladies may be requeſted, either inſtantly to come down, or to permit my waiting upon them above."

" How cruel you are," ſaid he: " why ſhould you wiſh to deprive me of the exquiſite pleaſure that I enjoy by a happy chance?"

" Chance!" thought Emma; " there ſeems more than chance in this extraordinary meeting!".

Yet how to put an end to it ſhe could not tell. Vexed and embarraſſed, ſhe paced the room, with her eye eve[illegible] ſtant turned towards the door, [illegible] Lord Wilmington ſtirred only a few ſteps; and, gazing ardently at her [illegible] figure—" Let me recommend to [illegible]," ſaid he, " my ſweet Miſs Mourtray, to have

e a little patience. Your French La-
s would hear with amazement that
ı ſhould ſcruple to paſs a few minutes
ne with me; for they have none of
prejudices . . . . ."

He had not finiſhed the ſentence, when
ma, who had been ſome inſtants medi-
ng her eſcape, darted out through a
door, covered with pictures, which
ſtruck her eye while he was ſpeaking:
door (the key of which ſhe turned
r her) opened into a long paſſage
ding to the ſtaircaſe; but the latter was
dark, that ſhe incurred the riſk of
aking her neck as ſhe ran ſwiftly
n.

Regardleſs, however, of danger, ſhe
ught only of flight; and, apprehen-
of being detained by the maid, whom
conſidered as the accomplice of Lord
lmington, ſhe had no ſooner reached
paſſage, than ſhe exerted all her
ſtrength

ſtrength to unbolt the ſtreet door; but her efforts to do this, did not ſeem likely to ſucceed.

Her terror now is not to be deſcribed: and Lord Wilmington, with a candle in his hand, appearing on the ſtairs, ſhe felt hopeleſs of eſcaping from him.

"Dear Madam! Miſs Mourtray!" exclaimed he, "what can be your intention? Whither are you going? Do let me beg—let me intreat—wait at leaſt for my carriage ...."

But without attending to him, urged by deſpair, Emma redoubled her endeavours to remove the obſtacles of bolts and bars ſhe encountered: while, trembling in every joint, ſhe was thus employed, the maid came running into the paſſage, drawn thither by the Earl's loud voice, ſtill vehemently remonſtrating againſt Emma's departure.—However, juſt

uſt as the girl, encouraged by a wink rom him, ruſhed forward to ſeize her by the arm, Emma had the good fortune to get the door open, and, darting out, to eſcape from their clutches.

No ſooner had ſhe cloſed the door, than, ſwift as lightning, ſhe flew along the ſtreet, in defiance of a heavy ſhower of rain, which fell ſo copiouſly, as ſhortly to wet through her muſlin gown; and her head and ſhoulders had not even the light protection of hat or cloak.

But ſolely intent on her eſcape, and dreading a purſuit, ſhe was ſenſible of no inconvenience; and, oftener running than walking, ſhe reached the upper end of St. James's Street, when ſhe felt herſelf ſuddenly ſtopped, by two extended arms.

"Hey-day!" cried a voice, which ſhe knew directly, with infinite joy, to be

Lord

Lord Miramont's,—" Hey-day! whither ſo faſt?"

" Thank God! it is you Lord Miramont!" cried ſhe, claſping together her hands.

" How happens this?" ſaid he. " Is it poſſible? Do I really ſee Miſs Mourtray? I am all amazement!—In God's name, what can you be doing in the ſtreet in ſuch weather, and at this hour alone?"

" Well may you aſk! but I have not breath to tell you,—let me but get away."

" Whence did you come?

" I am ſure I ſcarcely know myſelf:—O! that I could but get a chair."

" Very ſingular indeed."

" All

"All I can tell your Lordſhip," ſaid Emma, whoſe agitation almoſt robbed her of ſpeech, "is, that I have juſt left a houſe in —— Street, where I underſtood the emigrants lodged, to whom you behaved ſo generouſly."

"The emigrants!" repeated he, "Ha! ha! ha! Upon my ſoul this is excellent!—But how came you, then, to run away from them?"

Lord Miramont's ironical laugh, and the levity of his manner, hurt and offended Emma. "I know not, my Lord," ſaid ſhe, "how I am to underſtand this?"

"Inſtead of anſwering your queſtion," ſaid the Marquis, "permit me to repeat mine, and to enquire, lovely creature, to what place you are now rambling?" and as he ſpake, he put his arm familiarly round her waiſt.

"Good

"Good God!" cried ſhe, diſengaging herſelf from him, "is it poſſible that you detained me to inſult me?"

"Nay, nay; talk not of inſult, that is ſilly:—I did not, indeed, expect ſuch a *bonne fortune*; but hang me if I reject it.—You are a heavenly angel, and I will ſee you ſafe—ay, very ſafe!—"

"Wretch that I am!" cried ſhe, burſting into a paſſion of tears, and leaning againſt the rails,—"O! where ſhall I find protection? When I ſaw you, Lord Miramont, I fooliſhly believed I need ſeek no further; for, as a gentleman, I depended upon you: but this ſtrange, this unworthy language, convinces me of my error."

Her emotion was ſo violent, that ſhe felt ready to ſink, and Lord Miramont, much alarmed, ſaid, with great vehemence, "and protection you ſhall have; for

r God's ſake compoſe yourſelf, dear iſs Mourtray, and forgive me.—I have, erhaps, jeſted a little unſeaſonably; but am a monſter to cauſe thoſe tears to ow.—However, if you think my fault an admit of any excuſe, I will confeſs though I am now perfectly cool) that, uſt before I overtook you, I had drunk a onfounded deal of wine, and ſallying orth, ready for any miſchief, in an unlucky moment I perceived you; and you will not be angry if I ſay, circumſtanced rather oddly, but I am ſenſible I deſerve your anger."

"Well, indeed, may you ſay oddly!" cried ſhe, "yet it would have been candid, if you had, from the firſt inſtant, ſuppoſed *this* could only have happened by ſome extraordinary accident, as it certainly did; without my having the ſmalleſt cauſe of ſelf-reproach.—However, now, I deſire your Lordſhip will leave me.

"Leave

"Leave you, Miſs Mourtray! and alone! By all that is ſacred, I will offend no more. I am inexpreſſibly hurt at what has paſſed; but I conjure you to rely upon my honour for protection."

Lord Miramont ſo earneſtly ſued for pardon, and his manner, now, was ſo very different, that Emma's terror and indignation gradually ſubſiding, ſhe held out her hand to him, which ſhe juſt ſuffered him to touch, and then requeſted he would get her a chair.

But, with re-iterated apologies, and aſſurances of reſpect, he preſſed her to ſuffer him to ſee her ſafe home; declaring, he implored this favour, as a proof that ſhe was thoroughly reconciled to him; and that, in her wet clothes, ſhe would be leſs liable to catch cold by walking, than by ſitting in a chair.

Emma, however, ſoftened by his entreaties, would not conſent to his continuing with her longer than till ſhe could get a conveyance home; and as no chair could be found, they walked on in ſearch of a coach.

The violent emotions which had ſo rapidly ſucceeded each other in her mind, had ſo totally overpowered her, that ſhe was at length forced to lean upon Lord Miramont's arm: the tears ſtill involuntarily trickled down her cheeks, which he perceived, and, with peculiar delicacy, took ſuch pains to ſooth and compoſe her, that ſhe acquired ſufficient ſpirits to account for her extraordinary appearance in the ſtreet: indeed, ſhe thought ſhe owed it to her character, to give Lord Miramont ſome explanation of the cauſe. She, therefore, briefly related what had induced her to go to the new lodgings of the emigrants; her diſappointment in not finding them; the odd

odd equivocations of the maid; and, slightly touching on her surprize at Lord Wilmington's arrival, she mentioned the ostensible motive he assigned for his visit, but not her suspicions of the real one— Of course, delicacy, and the dread of embroiling the nephew with the uncle, obliged her to suppress all the objectionable part of the Earl's behaviour.

To account for her sudden departure from —— Street, she said, that having waited a considerable time, expecting every moment to see the ladies, and finding they did not come, she grew impatient at the delay; and thinking her stay, thus circumstanced, an impropriety, she wished to go home; but not finding it possible to get any conveyance, she had set out on foot, flattering herself that she should have presently found a chair; and, being disappointed in this, she was hastening in search of a coach, when Lord Miramont stopped her.

The

The Marquis had liſtened to her attentively; he knew Lord Wilmington too well, to doubt one inſtant that ſhe had been driven from the houſe by any other cauſe, than by ſome alarm ſhe had taken at his behaviour; and her narrative had excited in his mind ſuſpicions of a deep-laid plot againſt the innocence of Emma.

At length he ſaid, "The circumſtances you have related, and which I implicitly believe to be true, are ſo extraordinary, that I am inclined to think your French friends, ſo far from being in theſe lodgings, are totally ignorant of the infamous uſe that has been made of their name to decoy you thither."

"Good Heaven!" cried Emma, ſhuddering with horror, "You do not then believe they were in the houſe?"

"Certainly not:—recollect how often the maid contradicted herſelf, and the

whole of her inſolent conduct. However, without venturing any conjectures, I will take effectual means fully to inveſtigate this dark affair. In the mean while, my dear Miſs Mourtray, do not let it give you any uneaſineſs; and depend upon my prudence, and attention, moſt ſacredly to guard your name from ever being implicated in it."

Emma's heart was too full to permit her to thank him; yet, pleaſed as ſhe was with his behaviour, ſhe could not diſguiſe her apprehenſions of ſome unpleaſant ſcene happening between him and Lord Wilmington, ſhould he make any enquiries of him.

"Fear nothing," ſaid Lord Miramont, "he is the laſt perſon to whom I ſhould think of applying: the connection between us precludes all poſſibility of our converſing on this ſubject, and he was, likewiſe, my guardian. But no conſi-

deration

eration ſhall withhold me from pointing ut to you the quarter whence danger as ariſen, or may ariſe to you."

An empty hackney coach then ap-eared; Lord Miramont ſtopped it, and, uſt as he was aſſiſting her to climb the tep, a man, muffled up in a great coat, aſſed haſtily along the pavement, almoſt loſe to her. Emma fancied that he larted, but ſhe was certain that he re-eated her name; yet ſhe could not ueſs who the perſon was. Lord Mira-ont, now, after preſſing in vain to be ermitted to ſee her ſafe home, took his ave; firſt refreſhing his memory as to ie original place of abode of the emi-rants.

Daring and free as was this young obleman, with women whoſe princi-les were as free as his own, he yet re-ected virtue.—Hence, as ſoon as he erceived the unfeigned diſtreſs of Emma,

he became immediately cool; the fresh air, too, helped to dissipate the fumes of wine, and, feeling sensible that he had cruelly wronged her, he thought he never could sufficiently atone for his error.

His resolution, therefore, of discovering the iniquitous scheme, that he was convinced had been formed against her, was perfectly sincere.

CHAP. VIII.

EMMA judged it prudent, on her arrival in Wimpole Street, to aſſign, for the reaſon of her return before the time ſhe had ordered the carriage, ſudden indiſpoſition; and ſhe retired to her chamber, glad to be alone.- Nor was this indiſpoſition juſt then a feint; for ſhe really felt diſordered, owing to the hurry of her ſpirits, and to her being wet and cold.

If her late meeting with Lord Wilmington had been the effect of accident, yet his behaviour was ſuch, that ſhe could not doubt he had dared to harbour the moſt injurious deſigns againſt her honour. Her heart ſwelled with indignation at the thought; and if, as Lord Miramont believed, the Ladies were not in the lodgings in —— Street, then there could be little doubt that he had actually forged the

note which had thrown her in his
and ſhe felt fully convinced, that no
but her own ſteady reſolution in ge
from him, had hindered him fro
open avowal of his iniquitous views

In future, therefore, ſhe determine
avoid him moſt carefully; and ever
diſcontinue any viſits to his family, u
accompanied by her parents; and e
then, if ſhe had the mortification of
ing him, to behave with the moſt ma
coldneſs.

She had half a mind to ſend a note
ſome pretext to Sidonie, merely to di
ver whether ſhe was actually at the lo
ings near the Haymarket; but the la
neſs of the hour, and her reliance
Lord Miramont's promiſes, decided
to wait till the next day.

Inauſpiciouſly as her meeting had begun
with the Marquis, it had ended in a
manner

manner the moſt flattering to her heart; nor could ſhe feel any reſentment for the light freedom of his firſt addreſs, all circumſtances conſidered, ſince his ſubſequent conduct had ſo amply atoned for it.

Again ſhe thought, that, with ſuch ſentiments and good nature as he had ſhewn on this occaſion, it was impoſſible he ſhould fail of becoming a valuable character, whenever the effervescence of his paſſions ſubſided; and that he would determine to correct the errors of his preſent mode of life.

She had been for ſome time engaged in theſe reflections, when the clock ſtruck twelve; and, tired of waiting for her mother, who was not yet come home, ſhe prepared to go to bed, when a letter was brought her, which ſhe ſaw, by the ſeal, came from Lord Miramont.

With a fluttering heart ſhe haſtily tore it open, her eye running over the contents, not without a degree of hope of catching ſome word favourable to her ſecret wiſhes; but this not being exactly the caſe, ſhe more calmly, though a little diſappointed, read what follows:

" MADAM,

" If I preſume to intrude upon you at an unſeaſonable hour, I flatter myſelf you will have the goodneſs to pardon me, as I am led into this indiſcretion by an ardent deſire of contributing to your tranquillity.

" I wiſh I could fully explain the enigma that has puzzled us both; but all my endeavours to come at the truth have been ineffectual. I would not, however, withhold from you one moment the information I have gained, imperfect as it is.

" Imme-

" Immediately after I left you, I haſtened to the lodgings near the Haymarket, and found, as I had expected, that your friends had never moved thence. They conſented to ſee me; and their aſtoniſhment, when I produced the note with which you had entruſted me, is indeſcribable. La Comteſſe Sidonie gave me ſome of her hand-writing to compare with it; and the difference was very plain.

" But vexed as ſhe was at this fabrication, the Duke (poor man!) was infinitely more ſo; for, having ſuffered ſo much in France, he is eaſily alarmed; and it was not, without great difficulty, that at length I convinced him there was not (as he ſuſpected) ſome plot in agitation to injure himſelf and family.

" From the vile woman in —— Street, too well knew, by your account, that I ould not expect truth, though her equiocations might throw light on the mat-

ter. To neglect nothing to gain the intelligence I wanted, I began with that ſort of eloquence moſt likely to ſucceed with her.

" The object of my enquiry was, to know who lodged in the houſe. She anſwered, with apparent ſimplicity, that a French family of faſhion, conſiſting of a Gentleman, two Ladies, and two children, had been there for ſome days. I aſked their names; but theſe, ſhe ſaid, being outlandiſh, ſhe never could remember.

" Had it not been ſo late, I would have made an attempt to ſee theſe perſons; though probably it would have been ineffectual, as ſhe repeated the ſtory of the Lady's illneſs. She, likewiſe, ſaid, it was mighty odd that ſo many folks came to enquire about lodgers, who could not ſee them; and, that early in the evening, a young Lady and an old Gentleman had come,

who, after waiting ever ſo long to
rpoſe, took themſelves off.—I give
er own words.—I then aſked, fixing
es upon her, if ſhe knew this Lady
Gentleman; when ſhe anſwered,
feigned aſtoniſhment, that it was
ſible ſhe ſhould know people whom
ıd never ſeen before.

next made ſome enquiries in the
bourhood; and, though the perſons
om I applied differed as to the num-
the French lodgers, all agreed in
ng, that a family of foreigners had
eſtabliſhed there about three days.

The owner of this houſe I underſtand
a widow Lady, who left town the
ıe gave up poſſeſſion of the two up-
ories, reſerving the lower one for
f; and I could learn nothing deci-
s to her character; for it ſeems ſhe
ıeen but a very ſhort time in poſſeſ-
f that houſe.

" Thus you ſee, my dear Miſs Mourtray, this inexplicable affair, in defiance of my beſt endeavours, remains involved in obſcurity. Yet, I muſt freely confeſs, the ſuſpicions your recital excited in my mind, continue in full force; but, as it is impoſſible I can prove that they are well founded, I muſt be ſilent on the ſubject, though nothing can ever leſſen my abhorrence of this deteſtable ſcheme.

" Fortunately, as it was completely baffled by the dignity and ſteadineſs of your conduct, I think it improbable that any thing further ſhould be machinated againſt you.

" Diſmiſs, therefore, I conjure you, from your thoughts, every uneaſy apprehenſion; and, likewiſe, forget that part of my behaviour, which I now recollect with equal ſhame and ſorrow. Bad as is my excuſe, it is certain I was not myſelf, till, affected by your diſtreſs, my brain became

became cool. When in the full uſe of my ſenſes, I never can feel any ſentiments that are inconſiſtent with thoſe of the higheſt eſteem and reſpect for the amiable Miſs Mourtray; and have the honour to be, her

Very faithful and obedient ſervant,

MIRAMONT."

Emma's heart glowed with delight and gratitude, as ſhe peruſed this letter. That Lord Miramont ſhould take ſuch a friendly intereſt in any thing that concerned her, and that he ſhould have been ſo indefatigable in his endeavours to ſerve her, flattered her ſo much, that, though ſhe ſtill ſhuddered to think of the dangers ſhe had eſcaped, yet, ſince ſhe had ſafely eſcaped them, ſhe could ſcarcely regret circumſtances which had afforded Lord Miramont ſo fair a field for the diſplay of his courteſy; and had proved, that the high

high opinion ſhe entertained of the nobleneſs and benevolence of his mind was perfectly well founded.

But the more amiable he appeared, the more ſhe regretted the little chance ſhe had, even were he diſengaged from his fatal attachment, of being conſidered by him in the light ſhe wiſhed, ſenſible that ſhe had nothing to recommend her equally with, perhaps, hundreds of others; who, beſides perſonal attractions, had the additional advantages of high birth, large fortunes, and ſplendid connections.—Thus did love correct Emma's vanity; for, as her paſſion gained force, ſhe became diffident of thoſe charms, of which ſhe had once been rather too conſcious.

Mrs. Mourtray, who had ſtaid at her party far beyond the time ſhe had intended, at length returned; and heard, with exceſſive aſtoniſhment, and equal indignation,

indignation, ſome of the events of the evening.

But, inſtead of ſuſpecting Lord Wilmington as the author of theſe, or that his meeting with her daughter was premeditated, conformably to her prejudices againſt French people, ſhe declared, without heſitation, that thoſe emigrants, in ——— Street, had certainly allured her thither, rather from having deſigns upon her purſe than upon her perſon; and, that the Earl's fortunate arrival, who had, perhaps, ſeen her enter this ſuſpicious houſe, probably prevented the accompliſhment of their purpoſe; for which, without having recourſe to direct robbery, ſhe ſuppoſed they had ſome piteous tale in readineſs.

It was in vain that Emma tried to refute theſe ſtrange and improbable notions; and ſuggeſted that, from the Earl's language and manners, ſuſpicion ought to

to fall upon him alone, who had pretended he came, as well as herſelf, to ſee the Duke and Ducheſs; and, in confirmation of the very natural ſuſpicions his conduct had excited, ſhe mentioned her adventure with the Turk, which ſhe had forborne doing, ſo long as ſhe had any doubt who he might be.

Mrs. Mourtray totally rejected what, ſhe ſaid, could be no more than ſurmiſes, unſupported by proofs. She granted, that Lord Wilmington was not perfectly correct in his morals, and was believed to have low and obſcure amours; but to ſuppoſe that he, an old and married man, ſhould try to enſnare *her* daughter, a girl of faſhion, was quite a ridiculous fancy; and, as to his behaviour during their interview, ſhe was inclined to think Emma had been prudiſhly alarmed by a little unmeaning gallantry; wrong, certainly, for him to indulge in, at his age, and in his ſituation; but not a ſufficient reaſon

to

) juſtify the odium that had been caſt on him.

" All I hope is," continued ſhe, " that is adventure will cure you of your oliſh predilection for the French; for) Engliſh head fabricated the note, the nd-writing being truly French, as well the ſtyle. But, indeed, I always ought no good would come of your in- nacy with that Ducheſs and Counteſs s they call themſelves); for, though ey pretend to know nothing of this etty plot, I would not ſwear they had t a hand in it themſelves."

" Good God! Madam, how can you ppoſe ſuch a thing! They are people the higheſt rank, and equally diſtin- iſhed for their reſpectable character. rely you forget that Du Maſſon, whom u yourſelf like, ſpeaks of them with ery poſſible eulogium; and that, ſince r acquaintance with them, which was owing

owing to him, I have found them commonly eſtimable."

"Ah! poor man!—he may eaſily impoſed upon by his own countryn who all cling to each other; and ſo you, too, by the goodneſs of your hea However, perhaps, I may be rather ſevere upon theſe people, in this inſta but that does not hinder me from th ing, that the French in general, emigrants as well as the reſt, woul cut our throats, if they could."

Emma did not attempt to argue her mother upon her ill-founded judices againſt the French in gen becauſe ſhe knew it would be to no poſe; ſo ſhe contented herſelf with ing, that, though ſhe had only preſ tive proof on her ſide, ſhe muſt giv credit of this ſcheme to an Engliſh, not to a French head.

She next turned the converſation on the Marquis, deſirous of hearing her mother's ſentiments of him; but ſhe did not communicate the whole of his letter, not being willing to own that he had, even for an inſtant, excited her juſt diſpleaſure.

Mrs. Mourtray allowed, that he had behaved extremely well; "and," added ſhe, "you were very lucky that he happened to be diſpoſed to act with ſuch propriety; for many young men would have done otherwiſe; and I ſhould not have expected better of him, as he is reckoned exceedingly wild. But he is certainly a very fine young man; and, when he has ſown his wild oats, will make a good huſband, ſome day or other. I think it very probable he will marry his couſin, Lady Bell, who is, in her way, at preſent almoſt as wild as himſelf."

"O, no!"

"O, no!" cried Emma, colouring at the ſuppoſition:—"O, no! I am ſure he neither thinks of her, nor ſhe of him."

Although Mrs. Mourtray was firmly perſuaded, that, in the whole world, there was not a lovelier girl than Emma; and that, with her excellent diſpoſition, underſtanding, birth, and accompliſhments, ſhe was an object a Prince need not diſdain; yet it never once entered her head that Lord Miramont would ever think of marrying her, or that her daughter was in love with him; for, beſides having heard, in common with the reſt of the world, of his attachment to Lady Fredville, as few days paſſed without ſome ſatirical ſquibs being thrown out relative to it in the public prints, ſhe had no doubt, were this diſſolved, but that Lady Wilmington would ſnap him up for one of her daughters.

In regard to Emma, adhering, as Mrs. Mourtray always did, to any opinion ſhe had once taken up, ſhe felt aſſured, that, if ſhe had a preference to any man, it was to Sydney;—a preference that by no means met with her approbation.

The Ladies now retired to bed, where, in deſpite of fatigue and indiſpoſition, Emma ſolaced herſelf, till her eyes inſenſibly cloſed, with repeating Lord Miramont's letter, which ſhe already knew by heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

IT was not till a late hour in the mor ing that Emma found herſelf well enoug to riſe, feeling ſtill the effects of the i clement weather to which ſhe had bee expoſed, and the agitation her ſpirits ha undergone the preceding evening; an ſhe was finiſhing her breakfaſt alone i the drawing-room (Mrs. Mourtray beir gone out), when ſhe was ſomewhat ſu prized by a viſit from Sydney, whom ſh had not ſeen ſince his departure for Ca terbury.

He had, indeed, only aſked for Mr Mourtray; but Peter, who thought immaterial whether he ſaw his old o his young Lady, conducted him to th latter; never yet having been made t comprehend, that ſhe did not chooſe t receive viſits in her mother's abſence.

Emm

Emma was grieved to ſee that Sydney looked very ill, and that an unuſual ſadneſs hung over him: as ſhe held his character in high eſteem, ſhe enquired kindly after his health.

He anſwered, that he was tolerably well; but his reply, though civil, was laconic; and when ſhe tried to engage him in converſation, ſhe found him either abſent or reſerved. Convinced, therefore, that he had ſome ſecret diſquiet, into which ſhe had no right to pry, ſhe became nearly ſilent, till recollecting he left town the day of the maſquerade, ſhe aſked if he had never regretted not having ſeen it.

A faint ſmile then for an inſtant cleared his countenance, and ſhaking his head, he ſaid:—"I fancy there was not much to regret there; but, perhaps, Miſs Mourtray, you are of a different opinion."

"Why

"Why, no; upon the whole I diſliked it, though the novelty of the ſcene at firſt amuſed me; and, amongſt many dull, there were ſome curious and humorous characters: the moſt remarkable was a Conjuror, whom nobody could diſcover, though he ſeemed to know every body; and he told people's fortunes in a very ſingular manner."

"And did he tell your's, Madam?"

"O, yes; and it really was ſurpriſing how he came to know many of the things he ſaid to me; but, though I did not at that time comprehend part of his meaning, I have reaſon to think I do now."

"He foretold, then," ſaid Sydney, eagerly, "ſome agreeable event that has taken, or is ſhortly to take place."

"Not at all; he warned me againſt certain perſons in myſterious language, whom

whom I have ſince diſcovered, and found them very like the picture he drew of them."

Though Emma ſpoke in the plural number, ſhe only meant the application of her words to Lord Wilmington.

Sydney obſerved, that moſt fortunes were told, either by the parties betraying their own ſecrets, often unknown to themſelves, or by ſome caſual information the fortune-teller had gained of their affairs."

Emma ſaid the former was impoſſible in regard to her, as ſhe certainly made no diſcoveries of any kind to the Conjuror.

"Are you quite ſure of that, Madam," ſaid Sydney, with a faint ſmile; "are words always neceſſary to reveal people's thoughts? Do more juſtice to your eyes

and countenance; their language is too intelligible ever to be miſtaken."

Emma bluſhed; and, to turn off the converſation, ſhe aſked Sydney when he came to town?

"Only laſt night, Madam."

At that inſtant it ſtruck Emma, that then aſſuredly it was him who ſhe had heard repeat her name as ſhe was getting into the hackney-coach; and ſhe was ſhocked to think of the odd ſurmiſes, that muſt have occurred to him, upon ſeeing her in ſuch a ſtrange ſituation. She had not, however, the courage to mention the ſubject; and Sydney, finding her ſilent, obſerved, it had been a dreadful wet night. This required no anſwer, and he continued—"there was ſcarcely a poſſibility of getting a coach."—Emma knew this to be too true."

"Wea-

‘ Weather, however, is a circum-
ıce,” ſaid he, glancing a look at her,
o which, perhaps, you, Madam, pay
e attention.”

Emma could not miſunderſtand his
aning—“ I am not fond,” ſaid ſhe,
y gravely, “ of going out in bad wea-
r.”

‘ Indeed!—of courſe then my eyes de-
ved me, and you were not out on foot
night.”

‘ Pardon me, Sir,” ſaid Emma, an-
y, “ I was, as you ſaw, out: an un-
ſeen acccident . . . .”

Here ſhe was interrupted by Peter’s
ncing into the room, ſcreaming out
d Peppermint; and the Marquis,
ghing immoderately, cloſe at his heels.

Emma, aſtoniſhed, delighted, yet confuſed, ſtarted up; half an exclamation eſcaped her lips, but, recovering herſelf, ſhe reſumed her ſeat.

Lord Miramont, attributing the pallid hue of her cheeks to indiſpoſition, haſtened to enquire after her health; and poor Sydney, inconceivably vexed at his entrance, looked the image of deſpair.

Emma, with a ſoft ſmile, thanked the Marquis for his enquiry, and ſaid ſhe was ſomewhat indiſpoſed with a cold; but ſhe could not ſay this without bluſhing, as Sydney's looks clearly expreſſed that he thought it no wonder.

Lord Miramont, who had yet ſcarcely noticed him, having only had eyes for Emma, now ſhook him cordially by the hand; a ceremony to which Sydney yielded with ſecret reluctance; and taci-

turn

turn as he had been before, he became ſtill more ſo now.

The converſation was, indeed, conſtrained on all ſides; for both the Marquis and Emma wiſhed to talk over the events of the foregoing evening, which neither thought proper to do before Sydney; and the latter, though ſenſible that his company was by no means deſired, could not, however, prevail upon himſelf to depart. He ſat ſtill, therefore, miſerable, jealous, and diſappointed; for Emma ſeemed inclined, before Lord Miramont arrived ſo *mal-à-propos*, to repoſe in him a degree of confidence, that would have ſoothed his ſufferings; the few words which had dropped from her, made him very impatient to hear what would have followed, which he had now no chance of learning, or of obtaining the leaſt ſhare of her attention, as the Marquis, whom he perſuaded himſelf to be his declared

rival, ſeemed immovably fixed by her ſide.

At length Sydney took his leave; and Lord Miramont, immediately after he was gone, remarked to Emma, the ſtrange change that a few weeks had wrought both in his perſon and manner, of which he was far from gueſſing the cauſe; but, though *ſhe* could not entirely account for the alteration, ſhe could in ſome meaſure; for ſhe too well gueſſed the ſuſpicions that diſturbed his mind, and the jealouſy, however groundleſs, that occaſioned his coldneſs to the Marquis. The latter ſaid he could not imagine what had become of him; for that he had never ſeen him any where ſince the maſquerade.

"The maſquerade!" repeated Emma; "why, he was out of town at that time."

"O, no!

"O, no!—you are miſtaken, I aſſure you; for I not only ſaw him there, but ſpoke to him."

"Are you quite ſure, Lord Miramont, it was him?"

"Poſitive; and he wore a black domino."

This, however, did not remove a ſuſpicion that had inſtantly ariſen in Emma's mind, that the Conjuror had certainly been no other than Sydney; and ſhe wondered that, in the courſe of their late converſation on this ſubject, it had not ſtruck her before.

But Lord Miramont, to whom ſhe imparted her ſuppoſition, without mentioning all her reaſons for it, could neither confirm nor refute it; being, in this reſpect, in total ignorance himſelf. Emma, therefore, retained her own opinion, which

was ſupported by every ſemblance of probability.

Lord Miramont now told Emma many little circumſtances relative to his enquiries the preceding night, which he had omitted in his letter; and, amongſt others, the favourable impreſſion he had taken of the Ducheſs and *Sidonie*, particularly of the latter, with whom he was quite charmed; and, after ſpeaking of their lamentable ſituation with the greateſt intereſt, he enquired whether Emma thought they would accept, from him, a ſmall annuity, to relieve them from all apprehenſions of future diſtreſs.

But Emma, though exceſſively delighted with his generoſity, doubted that they would conſent to profit by it: ſhe well knew the delicacy of their ſentiments, and their pride, and that nothing but urgent neceſſity had induced them to receive, what ſhe had had the pleaſure

of

of procuring them, by her application to her friends.—She mentioned, therefore her doubts to Lord Miramont; adding, that ſince they received, in common with other emigrants, aſſiſtance from Government, they had often expreſſed great ſatisfaction that they need never again be troubleſome to individuals, whoſe favours, henceforth, they ſhould reſolutely decline; and that *Sidonie* abſolutely gloried in providing for the ſubſiſtence of her children by her needle work, which ſhe ſold at the Repoſitory, and that no arguments could induce her to diſcontinue this laborious employment. However, not to thwart Lord Miramont's benevolent purpoſe, Emma ſaid ſhe would ſound them upon it.

They then entered into a lively converſation on indifferent matters; and, at his requeſt, ſhe conſented to play to him on the piano forte, which ſhe did with infinite taſte. He had never before heard

her; as, at Lady Wilmington's, where he chiefly ſaw her, the Ladies Fontelieu were the only perſons whoſe talents were ever mentioned: hence his ſurpriſe and pleaſure were very great, when he found Emma ſo excellent a muſician.

She had juſt finiſhed playing, when Mrs. Mourtray came home, who was rather more amazed than her daughter at Lord Miramont's viſit; which, having now been prolonged to an unuſual length, he concluded, leaving Emma happier than ſhe had almoſt ever felt before; not that ſhe had been able, from any look or word of Lord Miramont's, to draw any inference favourable to her wiſhes; yet, as it was certain that he ſeemed pleaſed in her company, and that he regarded her with no common degree of intereſt, ſhe fondly hoped this, in time, might acquire ſtill greater force; and, in the mean while, ſo far from trying to conquer her partiality, ſhe reſolved, ſecretly,

cretly, to indulge it, and never to beſtow a thought upon any other man.

" And, pray," ſaid Mrs. Mourtray, as ſoon as the Marquis was gone; " and, pray, what brought hither that gay young man?—and how came you to receive him during my abſence?"

Emma became like ſcarlet, and could not anſwer without a faltering voice:— " I fancy, Mamma," ſaid ſhe, " his politeneſs induced him to come to enquire how I did, after being ſo wet laſt night; and, as to his admittance, that was Peter's fault, who makes ſuch ſhocking blunders with people's names as I am aſhamed to hear."

" Well, well:—that can't be helped, and muſt be ſo, if your father will perſiſt in keeping ſuch country bumpkins.— However, it is not proper, Emma, that you ſhould receive viſits from men; for

Sydney, too, I find, has been here; unleſs, indeed, from ſuch a reſpectable man as Mr. Chowles. But I am quite aſtoniſhed that Lord Miramont, who is reckoned ſo very ill-bred, ſhould, all at once, become ſo uncommonly polite."

"Ah!" thought Emma:—"I hope he is ſomething more."

The next morning Emma, being tolerably recovered of her cold, timidly requeſted her mother to permit her to call upon the emigrants; for ſhe felt uneaſy at what the Marquis had hinted, concerning the Duke's alarm at the ſtory of the forged note.—At firſt Mrs. Mourtray peremptorily refuſed; but ſeeing her daughter look unhappy, ſhe had not the courage to perſevere in her denial; therefore, after ſtipulating that ſhe ſhould not ſtay above five minutes with theſe French *folks*, ſhe conſented; and, in order to keep her ſtrictly to her promiſe, ſhe waited

waited herſelf in the carriage whilſt Emma went up to them.

The latter found *Sidonie* hard at work, though in a ſtate of convaleſcence: ſhe had been very ill, and was ſtill weak and pale; yet ſo delighted to ſee her *belle amie* (as ſhe called Emma) that her fine eyes acquired a tranſient brilliancy; while, with all the volubility of her nation, to which ſhe had given looſe ſince ſhe had become more acquainted with Emma, ſhe enquired if the author of the note had been diſcovered; mentioning, at the ſame time, the ſtrange *chimeres* (as ſhe called them) which the circumſtance had put into her father-in-law's head.

Emma could give her no information on this point: the ſuſpicions ſhe entertained were not of a nature to be communicated; and ſhe haſtened to treat the matter

matter as a fooliſh trick that had been played her, not worth attention.

Sidonie then enquired what *Seigneur* had lately honoured her family with a viſit, " *c'eſt un homme ſuperbe,*" added ſhe, " and with a moſt noble mind; for, though we were perfect ſtrangers to him, his behaviour was marked with that delicate reſpect and attention, which, probably, he thought due to our misfortunes. Do tell me his name?"

Emma felt a bluſh wavering on her cheek all the while *Sidonie* ſpoke:—to hear Lord Miramont commended always gave her a delicious ſenſation; and ſhe ſatisfied her friend's curioſity, but as conciſely as poſſible, being afraid to exhauſt her mother's patience, if once ſhe entered upon ſuch a ſubject; therefore ſhe haſtened to take leave.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

EITHER Sydney's good ſenſe, nor
a's inſenſibility, could cure him of a
eſs paſſion. When Fitzaubert had
ſtly preſſed him to make him a viſit,
nterbury, he had, juſt at that time,
ent opportunities of ſeeing his be-
Emma, in conſequence of Mrs.
rtray's confinement: from day to day,
fore, he had deferred his journey;
earing his brother was ill, his good
e decided his departure, and he
ded leaving town the day of the
uerade.

t, on his return to his lodgings at
, after he had taken leave of the
rtrays, and left Emma in tranſports
her tickets, the firſt object he beheld
apartment was Fitzaubert himſelf,
whom

whom he had imagined ill, and confined to his bed:—"You may well be aſtoniſhed to ſee me," ſaid he; "but a change in my affairs has brought me to town. In the firſt place, two or three people have been ſo obliging to die lately in the regiment, and thus I have got a lift: this gave me a pretext of buſineſs here, for which I obtained leave of abſence: and, ſecondly, the moſt important part of my buſineſs is to go to the maſquerade."

"And your illneſs," ſaid Sydney, "which alarmed me ſo much, what is become of that?"

"O! that was ſoon diſpatched, as it never ſeriouſly exiſted: I only wanted to get you with me."

"You are very obliging," ſaid Sydney; "but another time, when you may really want me, I may diſtruſt this being the caſe.

aſe. But, ſurely you have ſome better
:aſon for coming to town, than to go to
maſquerade?"

" No; that is my chief motive.—
happen (though I have been ſo ſhame-
ılly kept out of the world) to be well
:quainted with the Lady who gives it,
ır ſhe lived very near the Clergyman
'ho had the care of me; ſo I ventured
› write to her, and here is her anſwer,"
ıid Fitzaubert, producing two tickets;
for I aſked for two; therefore there is
ne for each of us."

Sydney would not refuſe his brother's
ift, propoſing to himſelf ſome pleaſure
ı ſeeing Emma, unknown to herſelf;
nd, indifferent as to his diſguiſe, he left
ıat matter to Fitzaubert, who procured
vo dreſſes; that of a Conjuror for him-
ıf, and a domino; ſtipulating, that
'hen he ſhould grow tired of his part,
'hich might very likely happen, as he
knew

knew very few people, that they ſhould change dreſſes.

As a domino, therefore, Sydney, who had but one object in view, firſt ſaw Emma engaged in converſation with a Turk; and deceived, like herſelf, by his height and figure, he fully believed him to be the Marquis.

But while he ſtood with his arms folded, contemplating theſe maſks, and ſuffering all the pangs of jealouſy, he was ſuddenly ſtartled by a ſmart ſlap on the ſhoulder, given him by a blue domino; who, calling him by his name, aſked, laughing, the ſubject of his reverie.

The voice Sydney inſtantly recognized to be Lord Miramont's, whom he begged, ſince he had diſcovered, not to betray him to others, which the Marquis readily promiſed: and now the former felt his heart lightened of half its troubles;

bles; but ſtill he was uneaſy at the Turk's aſſiduities, and very curious to know who he was; not without ſuſpecting, that Emma's patience in attending to him, aroſe from her being under the ſame miſtake, as that from which he had juſt been undeceived.

He was very glad, however, when he ſaw her, abruptly, quit this myſterious perſon; whom he reſolved, at all events, to diſcover, as his air and ſuperb dreſs gave him the appearance, of a very formidable rival.

He, therefore, conſtantly kept his eye upon him; and obſerved, that, without ſpeaking to any other maſk, the Turk ſeemed to have no wiſh but to eſcape as faſt as he could:—"His buſineſs, then," thought Sydney, "was with Emma alone!"—and this notion redoubled his curioſity.

The

The Turk, having no ſuſpicion he was watched, did not take much pains, when he was got into the hall amongſt the ſervants, to diſguiſe his voice: by this negligence, and his telling the chairmen to ſet him down in Groſvenor Square, Sydney diſcovered, to his infinite amazement, in the Turk, that grave politician, the Earl of Wilmington!

Soon after his departure, Fitzaubert, heartily tired of the character he had undertaken, and could not ſupport, reminded his brother of their agreement, who conſented to change dreſſes with him. The cap and the high-heeled ſhoes belonging to that of the Conjuror, completely diſguiſed him.

It was, therefore, very eaſy to Sydney, who lived in the world, to tell the fortunes of thoſe perſons he knew, and he talked a jargon that often admitted of a double ſignification. When Emma appeared,

ed, the obſervation he had made on Miramont's character, and on her ments for him, furniſhed his firſt h. Chowles was, in his eyes, a con- otible object; and, as ſuch, he de- ired him.

he Earl's looſe morals, and late myſ- us converſation with Emma, gave no doubt of his iniquitous views; though he drew a rough outline of he had no ſerious apprehenſions of an old profligate.

he delicacy of his own ſentiments conſtantly, hitherto, ſealed his lips; if, in this figurative manner, he d impreſs Emma's mind with even int idea that there exiſted a man, , in ſilence, humbly adored her, he hopes that ſhe would recognize, in image, the unhappy Sydney.

The

The ſeverity with which he had afterwards treated Chowles was occaſioned by ſome traits of his character that had lately come to his knowledge, owing to the following circumſtance.

A reſpectable Merchant, of the name of Newton, had lived in habits of great intimacy with his father, and ever ſince his death had ſhewn the greateſt friendſhip and kindneſs to himſelf; who held him in the higheſt eſteem, though their different ages and purſuits, prevented very frequent communication between them.

Every now and then, however, Sydney paſſed a day at Hendon, with Mr. Newton and his wife; a very worthy woman, whom he conſidered in a ſort of maternal light.—It happened, that the day after he had dined with Chowles, he went to ſpend a day with the Newtons, whom he found ſurrounded with their children,

and

l Mr. Cheveley, a very old man, rs. Newton's father,) who reſided th them.

By ſome chance, after dinner, in the ırſe of converſation, Sydney mentioned : name of Chowles, when, to his great prize, old Cheveley lifted up his hands d eyes with an expreſſion of horror, : which Sydney knew not how to ac- unt, as he was a man of a remarkable ld temper; and Mr. Newton, who ieſſed what was paſſing in his mind, ade him a ſign, which he perfectly ıderſtood, to drop the ſubject.

But, as ſoon as he was alone with 'dney, he explained the cauſe of Cheve- y's behaviour, in a manner that en- ely removed the aſtoniſhment it had eated.

His ſtory was long, but the matter ay be compriſed in a few words;—Old Cheveley,

Cheveley, who had once been a very capital merchant, moved with compaſſion at the deſtitute condition of Chowles, had taken him, when a boy, into his counting-houſe; and afterwards, at his ſole expenſe, placed him in a commercial line in the Weſt-Indies; laying thereby the foundation of his future enormous fortune.

Chowles, in the courſe of a few years, became ſufficiently rich to want no longer the aſſiſtance of his benefactor, who, likewiſe, went on very proſperouſly himſelf, till juſt before Chowles arrived to ſettle in England, to enjoy, and to add, by freſh undertakings, to the wealth he had already accumulated.

But at this period, Cheveley, by various accidents, unneceſſary to detail, but in which no fault was imputable to him, ſeemed in great danger of a bankruptcy.—Newton had, indeed, the will, but not the

the means, of ſerving him effectually: however, in the midſt of Cheveley's embarraſſments, his uneaſineſs was leſſened by the certainty with which he aſſured himſelf of the active friendſhip of a man, to whom he had been quite a father; and he conſidered Chowles's arrival in England, at this juncture, abſolutely as providential.

How great, therefore, was his aſtoniſhment, when, after much ſhuffling, and innumerable delays, even to hear any thing of his affairs, Chowles abſolutely refuſed—not to lend him money, for that he did not aſk, but—to become his ſecurity with perſons who, upon that condition, would allow him time to arrange his concerns, which he was certain, by this indulgence, he ſhould be enabled to do in the moſt ſatisfactory manner to all his creditors.

Chowles, not in the leaſt moved by the diſtreſs of his benefactor, remaining inflexible, the old man ſold every thing he poſſeſſed, honeſtly paid all that he owed, and, reſerving nothing for himſelf but a very ſmall annuity, he gave up houſekeeping, and ſought an aſylum with the Newtons; where he was treated with ſuch tenderneſs, as made him almoſt forget his misfortunes.

During the days of old Cheveley's proſperity, he had been fond of collecting pictures, and he had two, remarkably fine, that Chowles coveted extremely; and the former, who foreſaw that he ſhould be obliged to part with them, offered them to him at a price much below their value; this was whilſt he was uncertain what part Chowles would take in his affairs: the latter, however, refuſed to purchaſe them, pretending he had diſcovered them to be only copies.

After-

Afterwards, when all poor Cheveley's effects were ſold, theſe pictures fell into the hands of an auctioneer, when Chowles, who had pretended to deſpiſe them, was not aſhamed to buy them at an enormous price!

Mr. Newton alſo told Sydney, that, rich as was this man, his griping avarice engaged him into ſuch extenſive ſchemes and ſpeculations, that, if any reverſe of fortune were to befall him, it would not be a matter of ſurprize to any perſon well acquainted with his ſecret hiſtory.

From *theſe hints* Sydney ſpake: and, as nothing is ſo grating to an evil conſcience as truth, no wonder that the repreſentations in the magical mirror enraged Chowles almoſt to madneſs.

Sydney, ſoon after the maſquerade, accompanied his brother into the country; for, as he did not wiſh to acknowledge

the part he had acted there, though his views had been irreprehenſible, and to put Emma upon her guard was his chief object, yet he judged it better to keep out of the way for ſome weeks.

On his return, juſt after he had left his horſe at the ſtables, the firſt object he ſaw (and he thought his eyes deceived him) was Emma; her wet clothes clinging to her, handing into a hackney coach by Lord Miramont!—Almoſt out of his ſenſes, he followed as faſt as he could, not to loſe ſight of the coach; and, as it crept along at a very ſlow rate, he had, at leaſt, the comfort of tracing it to Wimpole Street. Then he went to his lodgings, filled with every unpleaſant ſenſation that can torment a heart, in which love, hatred, doubt, and jealouſy, contend with each other.

His firſt determination was, never more to think of Emma; but the next day, he could

could not reſiſt calling upon her, to ſee whether ſhe would deign to explain the phenomenon he had witneſſed.—He endeavoured to appear calm, but it was not in his power to diſguiſe his miſery; and the diſappointment occaſioned by Lord Miramont's abrupt entrance, has already been related.

Mr. Mourtray, after ſpending a week at Downton, returned to town much diſſatisfied with the little progreſs the workmen had made in the repairs of his houſe, which certainly would not be habitable, at ſooneſt, under ſix weeks: he was alarmed at the expenſive mode of proceeding of the conceited fellow patronized by Chowles; whom, nevertheleſs, he was too indolent to diſmiſs, ignorant how he ſhould replace him.

Both the ladies were ſecretly pleaſed that they ſhould be kept in town ſo long. They had agreed not to mention a ſylla-

ble, either to him or Henry, of Emma's extraordinary adventure; for, though Mrs. Mourtray did not ſee Lord Wilmington's conduct in the ſame light as did her daughter, ſhe thought it not improbable her ſon and huſband might; and ſhe well knew that the latter, with all his coolneſs, was very nice and punctilious in his notions of honour.

Henry, who inherited the ſame ſentiments, without the ſlighteſt notion of prudence, was, moreover, of ſo violent and inflammable a temper, that half a word was ſufficient, at any time, to ſet his blood boiling.

Emma, who poſſeſſed a ſuperior ſhare of penetration, had ſtill more dread than her mother of their knowing a tranſaction, which ſhe was certain would involve them in a very ſerious quarrel.

The

day after Mourtray's arrival, Henry
ying into the drawing-room to his
and ſiſter:—" Joy! joy!" cried
I am the luckieſt, happieſt fellow
h!—the dear creature will be mine!
you may both ſtare, but, by Jove, I
humming you; it is a literal fact—
ed by old Silbourne himſelf."

That is all this?—Are you gone
Henry?" aſked Mrs. Mourtray.

Why, if being curſedly happy makes
mad, for aught I know, I may

That a ſtrange expreſſion!" ex-
d Emma.

onſenſe," cried Henry: " Who
promiſed ſuch an angel as Selina,
00*l.* a year, can be calm."

"And have you, really, hopes of all this?" aſked Mrs. Mourtray.

"Hopes! Certainty, I tell you, Madam: and, if you will liſten patiently, you ſhall hear all that has paſſed.—You know I have been playing the *inamorato* for theſe two months . . . "

"Ah! Henry," interrupted Emma, "I fear you feigned more than you felt.—Miſs Silbourne's fortune . . . ."

"Hold!" cried Henry, warmly; "I know not why you ſhould ſuppoſe any ſuch thing. Selina is one of the loveliеſt creatures in the world; and, if ſhe had not a ſixpence, I vow to God I ſhould love her juſt as well: but her being heir to ſo large a fortune, is, to be ſure, *tant mieux*.—Now, if you chooſe to liſten, without breaking the thread of my ſtory, I will go on; otherwiſe not."

After

After a moment's pauſe, he proceeded.—"You well know that my whole thoughts have been, for ſome time, engroſſed by Selina. Sometimes I hoped, then again I feared; one day I was elated, the next ſuddenly depreſſed; and in this fluctuating ſtate I continued; never, however, relaxing in my *devoirs*, and in theſe ſurpaſſing all my rivals, whom I could with pleaſure have hewn to pieces. Yet, ſtill, I was very uncertain how this buſineſs would end.

"Old Silbourne, however, who could not fail of ſeeing my views, did not abſolutely diſcourage them; this I thought a good ſign; but, whenever I took courage, and ſought for an opportunity of avowing them, he always found ſome pretence to get away.

"You may imagine I had already explained myſelf to Selina;—though, with her, I had all thoſe difficulties to en-

counter which ariſe from exceſſive ſhyneſs and timidity: but the dear little ſoul's countenance, in deſpite of her reſerve, diſcovered to me that I was not indifferent to her; and, at length, I drew from her a ſort of half-permiſſion to ſpeak to her father.

"For this purpoſe, I accompanied them home from Kenſington Gardens this morning, and Selina having ſlipped away, I ſtammered out ſomething like a propoſal, but in a ſtrange abrupt way; and, I believe, I looked d....d fooliſh: for Silbourne could not refrain from laughing, ſerious as was the ſubject.

"If I had been cool and unconcerned, perhaps I might have found ample matter for laughter in the ſtudied ſpeech he made in anſwer; but, I was in a fright, and ſtood like a ſchool-boy trembling before his maſter."

"Well,

"Well, and ſo, Mr. Henry Mourtray," ſaid he, "you give me to underſtand, that you are in love with my girl;—this does not ſurprize me, for though I ſay it, who ſhould not, Selina is a pretty and a good girl, and will have, ſome of theſe days, ſufficient to live comfortably,—ay, and handſomely, too; but, then, there muſt be a little prudence.—Now, mark me, Mr. Henry Mourtray, without this ſaid old-faſhioned virtue, which you young men are apt to hold cheap, no fortune will ſuffice: for, if people are always ſtriving to outſhine others, and to cut a daſh, and ſuch like,—why, the end is neither more nor leſs than ruin.

"Now I am, myſelf, a plain country gentleman, quite free from ambition, independant in fortune and principles: but if, like a fool, I had attempted to vie with my ſuperiors, and, becauſe one man did *this*, that truly I muſt do *that*,—why, then, the upſhot would have been, that

I ſhould have run out; and, to patch up things, I muſt have gone ſneaking and cringing to miniſters; and, for the ſake of ſome paltry place, have ſaid *Yes*, when, perhaps, I ought to have ſaid *No*.

" But now to the point in queſtion:—Underſtand, Mr. Henry Mourtray, that Selina being my only treaſure, and I perfectly ſenſible of her value, I ſhall therefore never beſtow her but on ſuch a man, as I am convinced will make her happy.

" I have had many ſerious cogitations with myſelf on this ſubject, and the reſult of them is this—My ſon-in-law muſt have ſound religious and moral principles; good blood in his veins; for, mark me, I have great faith in blood; *that* which has been tranſmitted pure from a long race of honourable men, ſeldom degenerates.—Titles are, to me, quite a matter of indifference, being chiefly ſound.—Fortune is eſſential to be on one

ſide

ide or the other, but Selina need not eek it.—Comelineſs of perſon is deſirable, or it is a gift of Providence, and beſpeaks good will.

" Now, I will tell you fairly, Mr. Henry Mourtray, how far I think you anſwer to my conditions:—your education, and what I have ſeen of your diſpoſition, give me hopes that you are unobjectionable as to the firſt article; and, in regard to the ſecond, it does not admit of a doubt; as no family is more reſpectable than your's. My ſentiments I have already explained concerning titles and fortune: and I believe," ſaid he, ſmiling, " you have no great apprehenſions of any deficiency in perſonal perfections. Therefore, I have but...." —Here I, ſomewhat impetuouſly, exclaimed, " My God! Sir, why this *but?*"—

" Gently, young man, gently; hear me out: I ſay, then, having no other objection

jection to you than the ſhortneſs of our acquaintance, which has not allowed me ſufficient time to inveſtigate your character fully, I muſt have leiſure to do this before I give you Selina: for, ſhould I find that you have a propenſity for play, which has been whiſpered to me lately, though I do not believe it," (Here I was very near rapping out an oath, but I checked myſelf, and he proceeded)— "why, then, aſſuredly, if you play, you ſhall not be my ſon-in-law."

"And, pray, Sir, will you be ſo good," ſaid I, affecting mildneſs, "to tell me whom I have to thank, for the information that was whiſpered to you?"

"No matter; it is, however, in your power to refute the accuſation by your conduct: for if, during the courſe of one twelvemonth...." "A twelvemonth!" cried I, gaſping for breath: "why, good God!

God! Sir, you may as well talk of a century!"

"What, again you interrupt me!" cried he: "however, you are young, impetuous, and in love; ſo I will paſs it over once more. But now, mark me, if you comport yourſelf diſcreetly during this probation, which upon no account will I conſent to ſhorten, becauſe I chooſe to obſerve you during the trial of a London winter; which, if you paſs through happily, then Selina ſhall be your's.

"But you muſt ſubmit to my own conditions:—Theſe are, Mr. Henry Mourtray,—when you are not on regimental duty, to live all the ſummer with me, and be decorous in my family, which is a very regular one; for I would as ſoon admit a man infected with the plague, as one of your men of the *ton*:—mark that. In town, I ſhall allow you wherewithal to have a good houſe of your own; for my

my purſe is tolerably heavy. But I ſhall have a ſharp eye upon you, and if I hear of any irregularities, you ſhall not, hereafter, command a ſixpence of my fortune, which I ſhall keep unſettled, as a check upon you.

"Now I have done:"---(God be praiſed! thought I)—"if you chooſe to ſubmit to my terms, and your parents ſanction your choice, why, then, this affair is concluded: for I well know that Selina regards you favourably."

"You may eaſily believe," continued Henry, "that I ſwore and proteſted ſubmiſſion to theſe curſed conditions, which I ſecretly execrated: but I would have undertaken all the labours of Hercules, had he required them, to ſecure Selina.—The only point I conteſted was, the abominable probation, but I could not get him to ſhorten it; however, I hope Lady Bingfield will ſtand my friend in this, and

and ſhe has great influence with her brother.

"He would not let me ſee Selina then; but I am to drink tea with her this evening, and you ſhall hear what paſſes."

Mr. Mourtray, not returning to dinner, was yet ignorant of the happy event which gave ſuch delight to his family, and was the ſole ſubject of their converſation, till Henry went, in high ſpirits, to fulfil his engagement.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

MOURTRAY, who had been detained out the whole day on buſineſs, returned home early in the evening, and heard, with agreeable ſurprize, from Mrs. Mourtray, the fair proſpect that had opened to his ſon.

Mr. Silbourne, in his opinion, had acted very nobly; for, with ſuch a fortune as he poſſeſſed, he might naturally have expected, for his lovely daughter, a match infinitely ſuperior than Henry could poſſibly be; and, ſo far from thinking the ſtipulations he made at all ſevere, to him they appeared very reaſonable; and ſuch as any prudent father, where the happineſs of a daughter was at ſtake, had a right to exact from a young man, juſt turned of twenty-one,

light

light and volatile in diſpoſition, as was Henry.

The latter came home ſoon after his father, who congratulated him on the pleaſing event he had juſt learned; at the ſame time, hinting ſome apprehenſions that it might yet be blaſted by his own imprudence.

Emma, though ſhe did not acknowledge them, had the ſame fears; for ſhe knew the wildneſs and impetuoſity of Henry's paſſions; but Mrs. Mourtray did not conceive it poſſible that he ſhould fail of paſſing triumphantly through the trial; which, nevertheleſs, ſhe thought Silbourne had been too rigorous in impoſing upon him.

Impatient to hear what had paſſed in his laſt interview with the Silbournes, ſhe eagerly enquired, particularly, what Selina ſaid.

"Say,"

"Say," cried Henry, "what could she say? She blushed and smiled as soon as she saw me, which was all I could expect from her.—But the old man had the conscience to *bore* me again, with much such another harangue as that he gave me in the morning; saying, he meant it for his daughter's edification, as well as mine."

"And Lady Bingfield," said Mrs. Mourtray: "did she intercede for you, concerning the probation?"

"Why, indirectly she did; by very generously saying, she had so good an opinion of my honour, as to believe it quite unnecessary. And sweet Selina added, with her eyes cast down, that she never could entertain a doubt to my disadvantage."

"Amiable girl!" cried Emma: "it is impossible, Henry, you should ever give her

her cauſe to repent her confidence in you."

"I do not intend it; for I mean to be ſo prettily behaved, as to become the darling of all the old, ſober, ſtupid folks in the kingdom:" and then, lowering his voice, and turning towards Emma, he added,—"But I have hopes, however, that Silbourne will ſhorten the time, when this curſed reſtraint ſhall no longer be neceſſary."

Emma ſhook her head, but made no anſwer. After ſupper, when Mourtray found himſelf alone with his ſon, that he might have nothing to reproach himſelf with, he ſeized this favourable moment, when Henry, elated with his ſucceſs, was in high good humour, to repreſent ſeriouſly to him the abſolute neceſſity of a total change of conduct; not only as his obtaining Miſs Silbourne's hand depended upon it, but alſo, on account of the ſituation

tion of his own affairs, which, he ſaid, (to Henry's aſtoniſhment,) were by no means in a condition to ſupport him in the extravagant ſtyle he had adopted ſince he left Oxford.

His remonſtrances were ſo mild, and delivered with ſuch paternal tenderneſs, that Henry (though in general ill-diſpoſed to attend to what he called lectures) lent him an attentive ear, and for the moment was ſincere, when he aſſured him, that he was reſolved, as he termed it, to take up.

Mourtray, who had never found him ſo patient or reaſonable before, began to think Love had operated a miracle in him, and bleſſed the chance which had thrown Miſs Silbourne in his way.

The next morning he called upon her father, to whom he warmly expreſſed his gratitude for his conduct to his ſon, and

his

his entire approbation of the conditions he had propoſed.

A long and confidential converſation now took place between the fathers.—Silbourne, in very prolix language, detailed the plan he had formed for the eſtabliſhment of his daughter, which he was pleaſed to find would meet with Mourtray's hearty concurrence, whenever it could be put into execution.

The latter candidly laid open the ſtate of his affairs, his embarraſſments, and expectations; mentioning what he ſhould, at all events, ſettle on his ſon, which perfectly ſatisfied the former; who ſhewed ſo much honour, honeſty, and liberality in his ſentiments, with ſuch an ardent deſire to promote his daughter's happineſs, that Mourtray felt no inclination to condemn ſome of his notions as old-faſhioned and abſurd, becauſe they were not

not conformable to the manners of the preſent age.

Having been allowed to make his bow to Selina, who received him with more apparent joy than ever ſhe had dared to ſhew his ſon, he departed; leaving Silbourne exceedingly ſatisfied with him; and confirmed in his idea of the ſtreſs that ought, in marriage, to be laid on blood; as likewiſe, that there ſhould be in this connexion, as nearly as poſſible, a conformity of perſons, ages, and conditions. Arguing from this principle, he always had reprobated ſome ſchemes his ſiſter had tried to make him adopt; eſpecially that of ſeeking amongſt the peerage a huſband for his daughter.

Not that he would have been ſo abſurd as to refuſe a very worthy man, merely becauſe he was of ſuperior rank to himſelf; but, granting merit to be equal,

equal, he would have preferred the Commoner to the Peer. Without being parſimonious, he ſhunned oſtentation; and being perfectly content (ſtrange as this may ſound) with that portion of wealth that had fallen to his ſhare, he had ever ſecretly wiſhed that Selina's choice might fix on a man, to whom no objection could be made, but *that* which, in his eyes, was none—inferiority of fortune.

With a perſon thus circumſtanced, he thought he might, with better grace, make thoſe terms he mentioned to Henry; and though in theſe, doubtleſs, he had his daughter's advantage in view, he was not unmindful of his own; for, by ſecuring the young people's reſidence with him in the country, he flattered himſelf he ſhould feel leſs ſenſibly the difference of Selina's being married; and even gain, in her huſband, an additional companion to ſmooth the joyleſs period of declining age.

From Mr. Silbourne's, Mourtray went to ſee Lady Bingfield, who received him with the old-faſhioned civility of former times; expreſſing, what ſhe really felt, much ſatisfaction at the projected alliance between the families.

This Lady was both old and plain, conſequently often neglected by young people: the trifling ſervice, therefore, that Henry had had the good fortune to do her at the play, which few people even would have remembered, had won him her good graces.

Both her character and underſtanding were excellent, and her ſentiments noble and generous; often to the great inconvenience of her very limited fortune.—Originally ſhe had been rich, and enjoyed a large income, till an advanced period of her life; when, on marrying, her fortune was engulphed in that of her huſband, Sir Charles Bingfield, never to return

turn to her, but through ſo narrow a channel after his death, as ſcarcely to leave her ſufficient to maintain the dignity of her ſtation; yet ſtill her mind retained its native generoſity; and, while neceſſity taught her to bend her attention to domeſtic concerns, her ingenuity gave, even to frugality, the ſemblance of elegance.

Somewhat formal and preciſe in her manners, at firſt her appearance was rather chilling; but, to thoſe ſhe liked, her behaviour was warm and hearty.—Violent and iraſcible in her paſſions, ſhe loved or hated; was tender, or furious; always in extremes.

The Mourtrays, naturally being very deſirous of cultivating an intimacy with the Silbournes, invited them to dine and paſs a day at their houſe; and Mourtray, who had lately often complained, that he now ſeldom ſaw his favourite, Sydney,

went himself to request that he would add his company to this family party.

Poor Sydney, who had never seen Emma since that fatal day that had occasioned him so many pangs, had been persuading himself that he ought to forget, and consequently avoided every opportunity of seeing her. But his resolution was not proof against the cordiality of Mourtray's invitation; and the first glance of Emma's bright eyes dissolved the case of ice, with which he fancied he had encrusted his heart.

As he sat next to her at dinner, he enjoyed more of her conversation than others did; and afterwards, in the drawing-room, he was not a little delighted, as well as surprized, when, being at a little distance from the rest of the company, she said, blushing:—"When last we met, Mr. Sydney, I observed, with pain, that you had received an unfavour-

able

able impreſſion of me, from a circumſtance, which, doubtleſs, had a very ſingular appearance; yet it was accidental; and though I have reaſons for declining to explain it, they are none that I need be aſhamed of. Conſcious of this, I think well enough of you to believe, that, relying on my aſſertion, you will candidly acquit me of any *ſuppoſed* indiſcretion."

"Ah! Madam," cried Sydney, "how can I poſſibly doubt the truth of words, confirmed by ſuch an ingenuous countenance?—But, whilſt I admire your condeſcenſion, in recurring to a ſubject I dared not mention, I muſt confeſs how unworthy I am of your good opinion: far from being candid in my judgment..... I was, I am aſhamed to own it..... but I cannot proceed; for I hate myſelf."

"No, Mr. Sydney," ſaid Emma, "you muſt not do that: few, I am afraid, appearances being ſo much againſt me, would have judged favourably of me; and, perhaps, not many would ſo generouſly acknowledge their error, as you have done, or ſhew ſuch implicit faith in my veracity."

"Oh!—this goodneſs kills me!—can you forgive me; can you be ſo very generous?"

"It will be no act of generoſity.—Indeed, excepting juſt for half a minute, I never was angry with you; ſo, you ſee, you have long been forgiven."

"Since you are in this gracious humour," ſaid Sydney, ſmiling, "I am tempted to confeſs more of my ſins, humbly hoping to receive a full abſolution for them, in the lump."

"I know

" I know not that I ſhall ſtay to hear your confeſſion: perhaps, indeed, it is unneceſſary, as I may already know what you are about to own."

" Diſcovered to you by Lord Miramont," ſaid Sydney, eagerly:—" Was it not ſo, Miſs Mourtray?"

" Why need *you*, Mr. Sydney," replied Emma, ſmiling, " aſk this; ſince the paſt, the preſent, and the future, it ſeems, is known to you?"

" Would to God!" cried Sydney, with a ſigh, " that it were ſo: then, poſſibly, I ſhould be relieved from the dread of a miſery, which, of late, I have conſidered as too certain."

But Emma, apprehenſive that Sydney, whoſe heart ſeemed on his lips, would ſpeak explicitly on a ſubject ſhe did not wiſh to hear, now abruptly left him;

yet he remained much leſs unhappy, and greatly conſoled, by this ſhort dialogue, during which ſhe had behaved with the moſt captivating ſweetneſs; and ſhe was reinſtated, more firmly than ever, in his eſteem.

While Henry was buſily engaged in making love, the reſt of the company amuſed themſelves very well in converſing on a variety of topics; and, with Mrs. Mourtray alone, the evening paſſed on heavily. Though Lady Bingfield tried to adapt, to the level of her underſtanding, the ſubjects of her converſation, yet, as ſhe knew little of common goſſip, and was not fond of cards, which Mrs. Mourtray thought one of the indiſpenſable comforts of life, the latter inſenſibly yawned herſelf into an intermediate ſtate between ſleeping and waking, gently lulled by the diſtant murmur of a diſcuſſion on politics, between her huſband and Silbourne, when ſhe was ſuddenly

rouſed by a violent rap at the door; and, preſently after, Mr. and Mrs. Prouting, and Chowles, were announced.

Full dreſſed for an aſſembly, Mrs. Prouting's cheeks were quite in a blaze, being of the colour of a new brick wall: ſhe had changed her Brutus for a flaxen wig, which was ſurmounted by three unruly yellow feathers, that waved every way but the right; and her thick perſon was ſo attired, as to give undeniable proofs that *ſhe*, at leaſt, had no occaſion for thoſe ingenious contrivances, which cheat the eye with an artificial *embonpoint*.

This ſingular figure, affecting a light careleſs air, ſeated herſelf on the ſopha, by Mrs. Mourtray; who, though ſhe had no affection for her, felt her ſpirits wonderfully exhilarated by her arrival; for ſhe could tell who and who were together, at the laſt opera; how people were

dreſſed, and other matters of equal importance: ſhe could likewiſe fabricate anecdotes, greedily ſwallowed by auditors of Mrs. Mourtray's deſcription.

"O, la!" exclaimed Mrs. Prouting, "have you heard what a pretty piece of work there has been at the Wilmington's?"

"Not a word," eagerly returned Mrs. Mourtray.

"O! then, let me tell it you before I go!—You muſt know I was rather ſurprized to ſee only Lady Wilmington, and her haughty daughter, Lady Elizabeth, at the opera laſt night, when Jack Manders told me that Lady Bell was ſhut up, actually confined to her room, on bread and water."

"Wherefore?"

"Becauſe

"Becauſe ſhe has been detected in a ſhameful intrigue with Captain Darnford. I own I was not at all amazed; for I always thought her a bold flirt, and many people think ſhe did not dreſs in ſuch a looſe ſtyle for nothing: however, be that as it may, Lady Wilmington looked croſſer than ever; and Lady Elizabeth, as ſtiff as a poker, ſat with her mouth purſed up, vexed to death, that not one man came near the box the whole night."

"Not even Lord Miramont?"

"No; and, for a miracle, he did not attend Lady Fredville, as uſual.—'Tis reported that her little Lord has worked himſelf up, at laſt, to find amiſs that the Marquis ſhould always be dangling after her, and he choſe to ſtick cloſe to her all the night, ſo ſhe looked the image of Deſpair; and Lord Miramont, inſtead of being diſconſolate, ſeemed quite uncon-

 cerned,

cerned, and amuſed himſelf with any body who came in his way."

Emma, for ſome time, had lent an attentive ear: the poſſibility of a rupture between the Marquis and Lady Fredville made her heart bound with hope and delight, till, unfortunately, ſhe recollected how little Mrs. Prouting's tattle was to be credited.

At that inſtant this goſſip, turning towards Emma, ſaid, "Pray, Miſs Mourtray, do you often indulge yourſelf, theſe ſpring evenings, with walking in the ſtreets?"

"Moſt undoubtedly not, Madam!"

"Nay, then, to be ſure, I muſt have been miſtaken; yet I could have ſworn that, about a week or ten days ago, I ſaw you, by the light of my ſervant's flambeau, leaning on Lord Miramont's arm,

n, in Bond Street: I was in my chair cauſe it was a very wet night) going a party, in Brook Street."

Emma's colour forſook her cheeks: m the moment Mrs. Prouting began s ſpeech, ſhe actually trembled; for r veracity would not permit her to ny what her diſcretion was loath to n; and a ſide glance at Sydney con- ıced her his diſtreſs quite equalled r's; but Chowles relieved her from the ıbarraſſment of anſwering.

" What ſtuff and nonſenſe is this?" ed he, angrily:—" a fine ſtory, truly, e you trumping up!—make me be- ve it, if you can, that Miſs Mourtray alks the ſtreets, at night, with ſuch a ke as Lord Miramont!"

" What I ſaw I will believe," ſaid rs. Prouting; and the more offended, becauſe

becauſe having, by chance, told truth, nobody believed her.

" You neither ſaw this, nor do you believe it," retorted Chowles, with emphaſis; " and I ſay, and will maintain it, to be impoſſible."

And Mr. Prouting, finding the diſputants were getting very warm, reminded his wife, that it was time to go to the aſſembly: ſhe, therefore, flounced out of the room, followed by him, leaving Chowles behind.

Mrs. Mourtray, who knew the truth of the ſtory, wiſely pretended ſhe had not heard a word of all this, and kept Lady Bingfield in converſation, to prevent her from hearing it.

After the departure of the Prontings, Chowles, who always tried to faſten himſelf upon any ſtranger, made an attempt to

to prepoſſeſs Lady Bingfield in his favour, by a copious detail of all the valuable rarities in his poſſeſſion; but ſhe was ſo indifferent to every thing of the kind, and paid him ſo ſlight a ſhare of attention, that he left her in diſguſt, to ſeek more complaiſant auditors elſewhere; and, ſoon after, the company ſeparated.

Lord Wilmington having met Mourtray in the ſtreet, ſoon after his return from Downton, inſtantly perceived, by the open ſerenity of his countenance, that nothing relative to his behaviour to Emma had tranſpired; and ſtill being as deſirous as ever to attach him to his intereſt, he ſent an invitation to himſelf and family, and to the Silbourne's, to dine with him, upon hearing of the intended alliance between them.

Which invitation was accepted; but Emma poſitively determined not to be of this party, though Mrs. Mourtray, with vehemence,

vehemence, combated her objections, ſaying how very ſingular it would appear, if ſhe was not; proteſting, that her diſlike to Lord Wilmington was abſurd, and grounded on ſuſpicions ſhe could not ſubſtantiate.

But ſhe would not have carried her point, if ſhe had not repreſented that her father would naturally ſeek to penetrate into the motive of her refuſal; which, ſhould he diſcover, all the evils they had apprehended would undoubtedly enſue.

Emma, therefore, conquered her reluctance, and conſented to accompany her parents to Groſvenor Square.

Mrs. Mourtray, on their way thither, expreſſed much curioſity to ſee whether Lady Bell was actually confined to her chamber, as Mrs. Prouting had aſſerted; but, ſo far from this being the caſe, they found

found her in the drawing-room, in high bloom, and particularly lively.

Lord Wilmington behaved juſt as uſual to the Mourtrays, only with a degree of formality to Emma, much the ſame as he uſed to do in the country; and ſhe took care never to look at, nor, indeed, to ſpeak to him, but juſt at table, when ſhe could not poſſibly avoid it.

She obſerved that Lady Bell's ſpirits rather flagged in her father's preſence, who treated her with marked coldneſs. After dinner ſhe took Emma apart, and told her, that ſhe had been in a diſagreeable ſcrape with her parents, owing to her having careleſsly dropped a letter, from Darnford, in her mother's dreſſing-room; but, as ſhe thought proper to affect contrition, ſhe ſoon made her peace with her, though not with her father, who ſtill continued ſullen, notwithſtanding ſhe had made a ſort of promiſe to break

break off all correſpondence with Darnford.

"Which you will keep, I hope," ſaid Emma, eagerly.

"That's as it may happen," replied Lady Bell:—"if they give me unreſtrained liberty, and don't ſet people to watch me, perhaps I may; but, if they teaze and contradict me, and that Darnford ſhould again become preſſing,—why then, you know, they muſt take the conſequence."

"And pray, Lady Bell, have you conſidered what the conſequence will be to you, if, in defiance of your parents, you are perſuaded by Darnford to do the raſh act you have often hinted?"

"Why, I can't ſay I trouble myſelf with many reflections on the future: ſuffice

ſuffice it for me, to be amuſed with the preſent."

"O! what an unfortunate turn of mind!" exclaimed Emma; "and what miſery are you preparing for yourſelf!"

"Not at all: I ſhall be juſt as happy; perhaps more ſo, than you prudent girls, who deny yourſelves the gratifications within your reach, to graſp at ſhadows."

Emma, who perfectly underſtood the ſide blow ſhe meant to aim at her, made no other anſwer than, that there could be no real gratifications, unſupported by duty and principle.

Lady Bell affected to laugh at "her ſtarch notions;" adding, that ſhe ſhould feel exquiſite delight in outwitting her ſhrewd father; and that ſhe ſhould not care half ſo much for Darnford, were it not

not for the ſake of oppoſition: "beſides," ſaid ſhe, "there is ſomething in intrigue and myſtery, which gives a fillip to one's exiſtence."

Emma was turning from her, with a degree of diſguſt that ſhe did not attempt to conceal; but Lady Bell detained her, to aſk, if ſhe really thought it would be criminal in her to marry Darnford?

"Certainly," anſwered Emma; "becauſe it would be in direct diſobedience to your parents; and, excuſe my ſaying, it would likewiſe be a great folly; becauſe you are not ignorant of his character; but, even were that unexceptionable, you well know he has not the means of ſupporting you in that ſtyle of life to which your birth and rank give you a claim; nor conformably to your own habits and inclinations."

"I do

"I do allow there is ſomething of truth in what you ſay; and, certainly, I ſhould find a terrible change, as Captain Darnford's wife, compared to my preſent ſituation; but, as to his character, except loving a little too much wine, and having an itch for gaming, I believe it is good in the main."

"Good Heaven!—how can a man's character be good in the main, whom you acknowledge to be addicted to two capital vices?"

"Say, rather, faſhionable errors; and ſo very common amongſt men, in a certain claſs of life, that one thinks nothing about them."

"O! depend upon it, either of them, in a huſband, would force thought upon you."

"Pſhaw!

" Pſhaw! I would take care not to be annoyed by any thing I did not like; for, you know, *I* mean to govern, and keep my huſband in good order, I promiſe you."

" That may be beyond your power; and, think what you riſk? But, I obſerve, your Ladyſhip evades anſwering me on the point of diſobedience."

" O! it is a very *naughty* thing, to be ſure; yet I am not clear, that parents have a right to oppoſe their children's inclinations in marriage."

" Undoubtedly they have; and you have reaſon to believe, that Lord and Lady Wilmington only oppoſe your's, becauſe they know indulgence would be ruin to you."

" No:—their oppoſition is merely becauſe my choice falls upon a poor untitled

titled man; but, if Darnford was a Peer, or a very rich Commoner, not a word would be ſaid about his character."

Emma, ſecretly, was of the ſame opinion herſelf, as far as it related to the Earl; but this ſhe was too prudent to avow; and, when ſhe parted with Lady Bell, ſhe reflected, with real concern, that a perſon, to whom ſhe had been ſo long attached, ſhould be ſo totally void of principle.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

ABOUT a fortnight now paſſed ſmoothly, during which time Emma occaſionally ſaw Lord Miramont, who, without taking any great pains to ſeek, always ſeemed delighted when he met her: and he and Lady Fredville were no longer inſeparable, for a degree of coldneſs apparently ſubſiſted between them.

Sydney, as uſual, was received on a friendly footing in the Mourtray family, where he was highly valued by its head; nor could Emma fail of acknowledging his worth, though ſhe was careful to prevent him, from entertaining hopes, of her ever ſharing thoſe ſentiments that, involuntarily, he often betrayed.

Of courſe ſhe ſaw a great deal of Lady Bingfield and Selina; the former inſpired her with infinite eſteem and reſpect; and the latter, with the tendereſt affection; for, though Selina ſtill retained a degree of reſerve, which, frank and open as was Emma herſelf, ſhe felt rather diſcouraging; yet ſhe found her diſpoſition ſo gentle and amiable, that ſhe hoped, as their intimacy increaſed, all conſtraint would be baniſhed between them.

Henry, in the mean while, lived full as much at Silbourne's houſe as at his father's: he ſeemed entirely to have forgotten his old haunts; and ſince the day that he had been promiſed Selina's hand, his conduct appeared perfectly regular.

Silbourne's partiality towards him daily increaſed; he even ſometimes hinted, that it was not abſolutely impoſſible, that he might ſhorten the term of his probation: and Selina, as far as was conſiſten-

with her timid diſpoſition, gave him every mark of regard and preference.

From ſo auſpicious a beginning, the Mourtrays flattered themſelves that the end would terminate as they could wiſh; and that their ſon's attachment would entirely correct him of all his errors and defects. His mother viewed with exultation the proſperous ſucceſs, that, ſo early in life, her darling child had met with; and anticipated, in imagination, the delight ſhe ſhould feel in his very advantageous eſtabliſhment.

With theſe gay hopes, and with their tempers in perfect harmony with each other, the Mourtray family, without any company, were ſitting one day after dinner in ſocial chat together, when a letter was delivered to Henry.—"No anſwer is required, Sir," ſaid Peter, as he left the room.

Juſt at that inſtant, Mrs. Mourtray was telling (what ſhe thought) a very good ſtory; and her ſon waited its concluſion to read his letter, but accidently his eye glanced on the direction, upon which, he tore it open, and at the firſt words he ſaw, he involuntarily ſtarted; the colour forſook his cheeks, and, huddling it into his pocket, he bounced up, and ruſhed out of the parlour.

"God bleſs us!" cried Mrs. Mourtray, "what can that letter be? Did you mark Henry's altered countenance?—There is ſomething the matter, I am ſure. Do, Mr. Mourtray, ſtep and ſee after him."

"How you do love to alarm yourſelf about nothing at all, my dear!" ſaid Mourtray, who had, for a few minutes, been in one of his abſent fits; inſomuch as not even to have noticed Peter's entrance or exit, though he had been re-

called to himſelf by Henry's banging the door after him.

Mrs. Mourtray then told her daughter to go and ſee if any thing was the matter: but Mr. Mourtray prevented her. "Let her ſit ſtill," ſaid he: "if Henry does not return ſoon, I will go to him myſelf."

So ſaying, he drew towards him the remains of a bottle of port, which he prepared leiſurely to finiſh before he ſtirred. Mrs. Mourtray, who had not one particle of her huſband's phlegm in her compoſition, ſat jogging her knee, reſtleſs and uneaſy, ſtill urging him to move, or, at leaſt, to ſuffer her.

But, while he was quietly aſſuring her he ſhould go in an inſtant, a ſudden bang of the hall door, made her exclaim—"There!—I'll be hanged if Henry is not gone out:" and up ſhe ſprang to fly after him, when, in her haſte, ſhe ſtumbled againſt

againſt a chair, and hurting her foot extremely, the pain ſhe ſuffered forced her to ſit down.

While Mourtray was buſy in rubbing her foot, Emma was diſpatched to ſee whether Henry was in the houſe, but he was not to be found.

"There—I told you ſo, Mr. Mourtray! I hope, now, you will believe me another time.—Henry gone! without our knowing any thing about the letter; and all by your ſlow ways!"

"Grant me patience!" exclaimed Mourtray. "How can any reaſonable being worry herſelf thus about trifles?—Becauſe Henry receives a letter, perhaps an official one on military buſineſs, and then goes out, chimerical apprehenſions poſſeſs your brain, and you ſprain your ancle to run wildly after him!"

"Indeed, Papa," ſaid Emma, "my brother turned as pale as death before he left the parlour; and Peter ſays, the letter was brought by a chairman; and that Henry looked as if he were crazy when he flew out of the houſe."

"Oh! my God!" cried her mother, "ſend after him this minute!—Do, my dear Mr. Mourtray, oblige me. I may, perhaps, appear very fooliſh; but, upon my word, I am terrified out of my wits."

The account given by his daughter made more impreſſion upon Mourtray than his wife's fears; which he had too often experienced to be the ſole offſpring of her imagination, to be much alarmed by them: but now, he conſented to ſet out in ſearch of his ſon, though whither to go he knew not.

Mr. Silbourne's houſe was the firſt place that occurred to him; there he found

the family abſent, juſt gone to Richmond, accompanied, as he heard, by Lady Bingfield.

Thence he went through Bond Street, down St. James's Street and Pall Mall, as far as Charing Croſs; ſtopping at moſt of thoſe places where officers in the Guards commonly reſort, but without gaining any intelligence of Henry.

Quite fatigued, yet more perplexed than alarmed, he returned home; when, juſt as he had reached his door, he was overtaken by Sydney, whom he invited into the houſe, relating to him his fruitleſs ſearch after his ſon, and the circumſtances that had occaſioned him to undertake it.

Sydney, with all that friendly warmth which characterized his diſpoſition, offered inſtantly to ſeek Henry; aſſuring Mrs. Mourtray, with a ſmile, that if he

was

was above ground he ſhould be found; and treating his abſence lightly, as an accidental matter, he contrived tolerably to pacify her fears, as well as Emma's, who by this time had caught them from her mother.

"Well," ſaid the latter, as ſoon as he was gone, "well, I really think Mr. Sydney is not half ſo ugly as he uſed to be!"

"When he returns with Henry," ſaid Mourtray, ſmiling, "you will diſcover that he is become handſome."

Many hours now paſſed in a ſtate of diſagreeable ſuſpenſe. At firſt Mourtray, affecting perfect compoſure, began a game at cheſs with Emma, but he made as many blunders as ſhe did; then found fault with her play, and leaving the game unfiniſhed, he ſtarted up, and paced the room. Next he went out into the ſtreet, then

then returned, and throwing himſelf into a chair, ſat liſtening, in hopes every inſtant of hearing ſomething of his ſon.

Mrs. Mourtray, who had originally been the moſt alarmed, ſat ſome time after Sydney's departure in a ſort of ſtupor; then became reſtleſs and eaſy by fits and ſtarts, till, the clock ſtriking twelve, ſhe relapſed into greater agitation than ever; and believing ſomething might be done of which her huſband had not thought, ſhe diſpatched the ſervants, one after the other, to different places, to enquire after their young maſter.

Emma, equally alarmed, but endued with greater fortitude than her mother, ſhewed more apparent calmneſs; yet ſhe haraſſed her mind with conjecturing what could have happened; and her knowledge of her brother's impetuous temper naturally ſuggeſted terrifying apprehenſions.

At

At length, a violent ringing at the door-bell rouſed all three: in an inſtant they were in the hall, and, with difficulty, Mourtray prevented his wife from ſnatching out of his hand a letter, ſent him by Sydney, which he prudently thought he had better run over before ſhe and Emma ſaw it.

While he haſtily glanced at the contents, Mrs. Mourtray clamorouſly inſiſted upon hearing them; and, as he found ſhe ſuſpected ſtill worſe news than he had to communicate, he read aloud what follows:

Half Moon Street, June 25th.
half paſt 12 o'clock.

My dear Sir,

"I have only time to write a ſingle line, to ſay Henry is ſafe, and with me; but I cannot diſguiſe from you, that a very unfortunate affair in which he has been engaged, and that I cannot, with prudence,

prudence, ſtay to relate, renders it abſolutely neceſſary he ſhould leave town without a moment's delay.—When this reaches you, he and I ſhall already be on our way to my cottage, whence I will write to you fully; but do not write to him till you have heard from me, and keep his abode a profound ſecret. In the mean while, rely upon my paying every attention to his ſafety and comfort.

" JULIAN SYDNEY."

" God of heaven and earth!" exclaimed Mrs. Mourtray, " what can all this mean?—What can be Sydney's motive for thus hurrying my ſon away?"

" Doubtleſs, a good one," replied Mourtray; " but it is impoſſible for me to ſay more till I hear from him again."

" *Hear!* La! how compoſedly you talk! Something very terrible muſt have happened

happened!—Remember, I ſaid ſo from the firſt, and you ſee, now, I was right."

"You argued then on mere conjecture," ſaid Mourtray; "though, unfortunately, the event has proved that ſomething is wrong."

"What ſcrape can Henry be got into?" ſaid Mrs. Mourtray.

"Perhaps he has unluckily contracted ſome debt," ſaid Emma, "and is obliged to fly for fear of an arreſt."

Mourtray, who ſat abſorbed in thought, remained ſilent; while his wife, catching at this idea, ſaid, ſhe hoped it would prove nothing worſe; "for if it be only a debt, my dear," turning to her huſband, "you can ſoon ſettle that."

"I wiſh it may be in my power," anſwered he, ſighing deeply.

"You

« You *wiſh!* Can there be a doubt of s being in your power?" cried Mrs. ſourtray.—"Oh, my poor Henry, what ill become of you!" and ſhe burſt into ears.

Mourtray tried to calm her agitation, ıtreating her to call to her aid ſufficient rtitude, to be prepared to encounter hatever evils they had yet to learn: hile Emma, hanging over her, and hold- g her hands in her's, tenderly conjured r to compoſe herſelf.—

« Let us, my dear Mamma," ſaid ſhe, truſt that all will ſoon be well; and, the mean time, find comfort in know- g, that Henry is ſafe under Sydney's re and protection. I am ſure I ſhall ever ve that good man, for his behaviour on is occaſion."

Mrs. Mourtray, without noticing mma's commendation of Sydney, con-

tinued weeping; and every now an
aſſerted, that her ſon, however ur
nate he might be, could not have
much to blame.

But Mourtray, who thought otherw
and who had formed his own opinio
the circumſtance to which Sydney all
ed in his letter, ſaid, he greatly fear
Henry had been drawn into his preſe
diſtreſs by ſome ungovernable paſſion.

"Poor, dear boy!" exclaimed Mrs
Mourtray: "how can you be ſo unkin
to ſuppoſe this?—But you are alway
blaming him; though, Heaven knows,
his only fault is a little too much ſpirit."

Mourtray would not ſay any thing to
add to her vexation, but he keenly felt
that her fatal blindneſs to his faults, and
her never ſuffering him, from a child,
(when ſhe could help it) to be contra-

dicted,

dicted, had done her ſon irreparable miſchief.

The ladies at length yielded to Mourtray's perſuaſions, to retire to reſt, after he had in vain employed them for ſome time.—Too much diſturbed himſelf to think of repoſe, he remained ſome hours buried in thought, whilſt his wife forgot her cares and anxieties in ſleep.

In the midſt of his unpleaſant meditations, he was ſuddenly interrupted by Peter's announcing an officer, who ſaid, he muſt ſpeak with him that inſtant:—Mourtray, hoping this viſit would at leaſt clear his perplexities, deſired he might be admitted; when the ſtranger, haſtily apologizing for his intruſion, eagerly enquired, if his ſon was in the houſe?

Mourtray aſſured him he was not; and the ſtranger, after ſaying, that he was very glad to hear it, added, that his only motive

motive for aſking the queſtion, was, to bid him haſten away as faſt as poſſible, and conceal himſelf carefully.

Poor Mourtray, with a tremulous voice, had juſt begun to demand an explanation of the unfortunate buſineſs in which his ſon was involved, when he was again diſturbed by a new alarm; for a violent thundering at the door was heard, which made him haſten into the hall; and, to his great horror, a conſtable and two other perſons ruſhed into the houſe, with a ſearch-warrant, which they produced; and, at that inſtant, the officer, who did not wiſh to be ſeen, ſlipped away.

The conſtable and his followers then, in an authoritative tone, enquired after Mr. Henry Mourtray, and inſiſted on ſearching the houſe for him, which the wretched father dared not oppoſe, as the charge they had againſt his ſon was of the moſt ſerious nature; and he knew too,

too well that every man's houſe was ſafe againſt ſuch intruders, excepting when an accuſation was lodged againſt a perſon for crimes that authorized their viſit. To ſave his wife and daughter the ſhock of this, all that Mourtray could now do, was to make them riſe inſtantly, under pretence of feeling himſelf ill, and to ſhut himſelf up with them in his ſtudy; while Henry's purſuers ſatisfied themſelves, that the object of their ſearch was no where in the houſe; after which they departed, and Mourtray and his family threw themſelves on their beds.

END OF VOL. II.